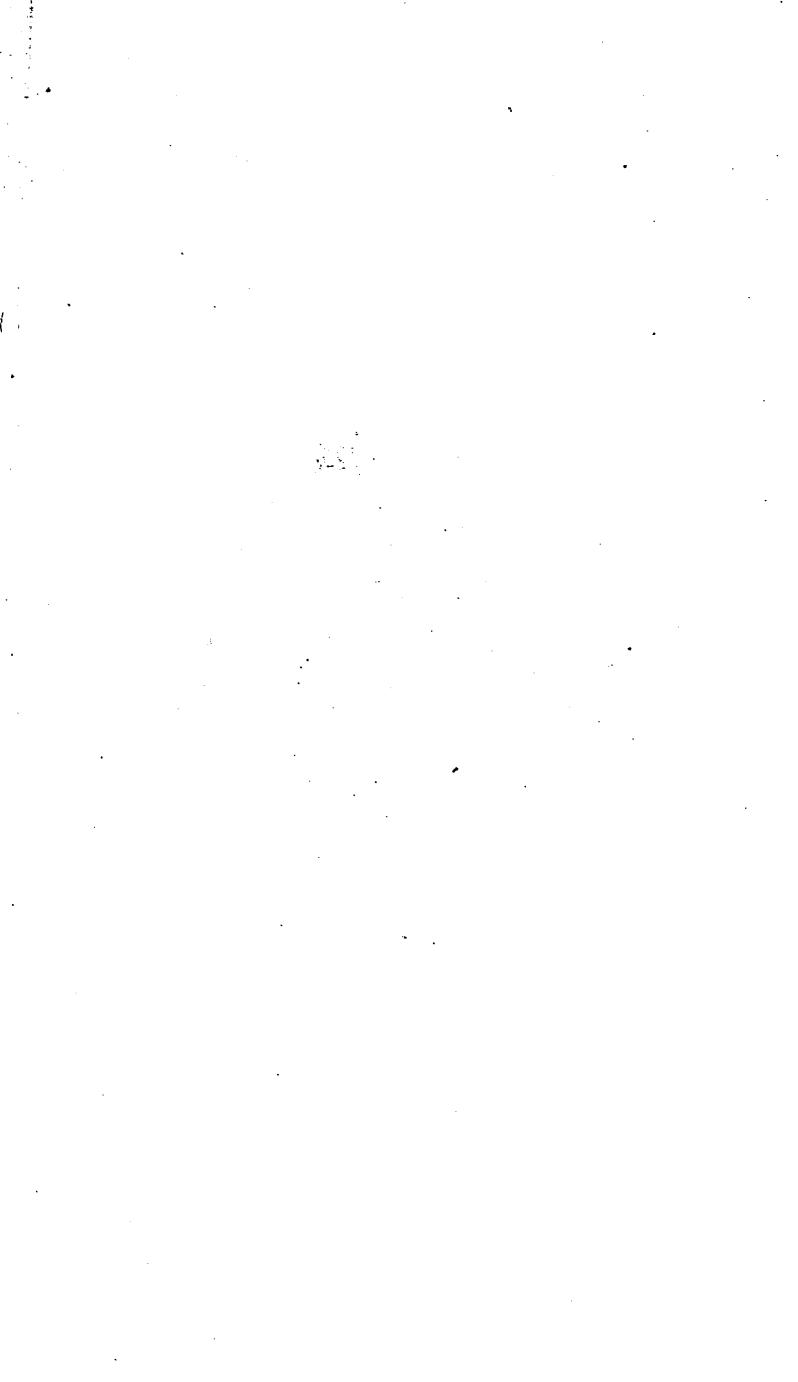


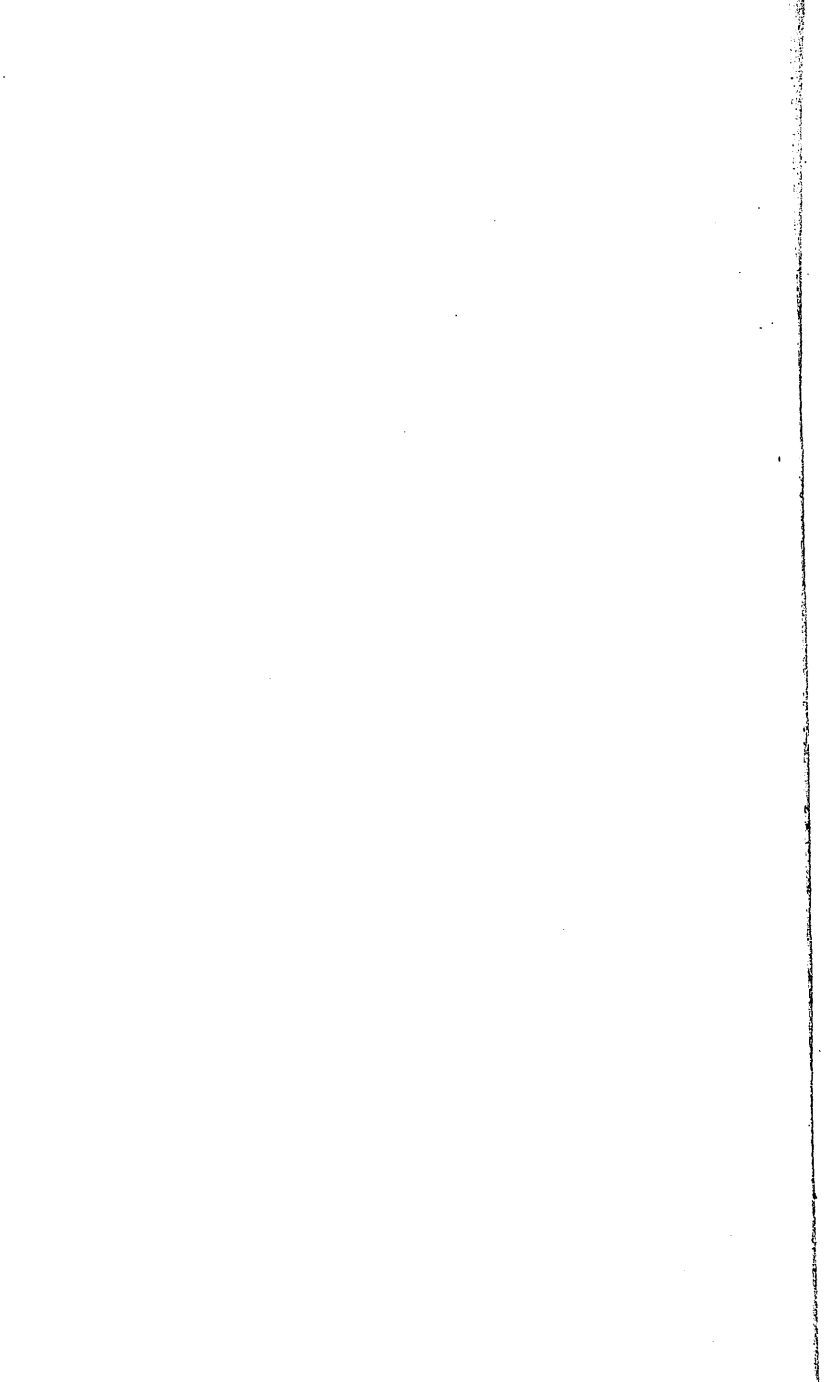
THE LIFE  
AND  
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OF  
JESUS CHRIST

VOLUME TWO

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THE LIFE & TEACHING OF  
JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD

VOLUME II



# THE LIFE & TEACHING OF JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD

By  
THE REV. JULES LEBRETON, S.J.  
*Professor at L'Institut Catholique, Paris*

Translated from the French

“Now this is eternal life: That they may know thee, the  
only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”

(John xvii, 3.)

VOLUME II

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# THE LIFE AND TEACHING OF JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD

## VOLUME II

### CHAPTER I

#### THE JOURNEY TO JUDEA. THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

##### *I. The Journey to Judea.*

FOLLOWING the Gospel record, we have reached the decisive period of our Lord's life. The great disclosures of Cæsarea Philippi, with the Transfiguration, mark the culminating point in the revelation of Christ. The Apostles have received from our Lord, at least in expectation and in promise, the powers necessary to secure the permanence of their work ; the Church has been founded, and against her the gates of Hell shall in no way prevail.

But simultaneously with His profound and definitive influence upon the Apostles, we have observed also our Lord's attitude in the presence of the general multitude, in His relations with whom He had, for some months now, imposed upon Himself a greater degree of reserve. He had had to leave the shores of the lake and even Galilee itself, and when from Phenice and Philip's country He retraced His steps over the territory of Herod, He would only do so provided that His identity remained unknown. These precautions were signs of growing danger ; only a few months and there would break the storm of which every indication heralded the immediate approach.

In tracing the history of these few months we can no longer make use of those sources which, up to now, have been the guides upon whom we have relied most ; we mean S. Matthew and S. Mark. Their account carries us suddenly to the last weeks of our Lord's life. On the other hand, the remaining two evangelists, S. John and S. Luke, relate

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the events of this last period in great detail; moreover, their accounts are entirely independent of one another. Before we follow them step by step, it will be useful to try to make clear the purpose and main characteristics of each. In this difficult question, which has been the subject of much controversy, we do not aspire to reach any certain conclusions and shall content ourselves with following up probabilities alone.

So far as S. John is concerned, Dr. Sanday writes (D.B., II, 630b): 'The historical value of the Fourth Gospel comes out strongly in this period; rarely has any situation been described with the extraordinary vividness and truth to nature of ch. vii (see esp. vv. 11-15, 25-27, 31, 32, 40-52). Not less graphic are the details of ch. ix; and there is marked precision in the statement of John x, 22 ff., 40 ff.; xi, 54-57. We note a special intimacy with what passes in the inner counsels of the Sanhedrin (John vii, 47-52; xi, 47-53). This intimate knowledge might have been derived through Nicodemus or through the connection hinted at in xviii, 15. But apart from the peculiar verisimilitude of these details, some such activity as that described in these chapters is required to explain the great catastrophe which followed. It is impossible that Jesus should have been so much a stranger to Judea and Jerusalem as the synoptic narrative would at first sight seem to make Him.'

In this account of S. John we first find our Lord at Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles (vii), and the narrative then passes to events that must have followed a little later on (viii-x, 21), all of which must have taken place in the second half of October and so could not have occupied more than fourteen days. We then (x, 22) see Jesus at Jerusalem again for the Feast of Dedication, towards the end of December, after which He at once retires to Perea, beyond Jordan, where John the Baptist's ministry had been carried on. From there, at the invitation of Lazarus' sisters, He went to Bethania, later withdrawing to Ephrem on the borders of the desert to the north-east of Jerusalem (xi, 55), finally leaving there for the capital itself, where He was to celebrate the Passover and die. All these events are closely linked to each other, apart from an interval of seven or eight weeks between the Feasts of Tabernacles and Dedication.

It is into this interval that many commentators insert the facts related by S. Luke (ix, 51-xix, 27). Thus Godet

in his *Saint Luc* (II, p. 7) writes : ' How are we to fill up the six or seven months between the Feast of Tabernacles and the Passover that witnessed our Lord's death ? Not by the scanty records of Matt. xix and xx, and Mark x, which scarcely contain enough matter to account for a single week. Immediately after the Feast of Tabernacles, therefore, Jesus returned to Galilee, and it was then that He took His final leave of that province, setting out, as we read in Luke ix, 51, to approach Jerusalem by slow stages, carrying on His ministry all the time. . . . In each case, S. Luke's narrative supplies the natural transition between those of the other Synoptics and S. John. . . . As to the contents of Luke's ten chapters, they fit in perfectly with the situation as a whole. Our Lord took with Him into Judea all that Galilee had given Him in the shape of devoted followers, forming the nucleus of His future Church. . . . To prepare them, while on the journey, for their future mission was His unflagging task, and He worked at it continuously, in two ways. He sent them out as missionaries before Him as He had previously sent the twelve, thus making them—also like the twelve—serve the apprenticeship of their coming apostolate. Further, since the first condition of this ministry of preaching was the breaking of the ties linking them to earthly things, a complete separation from the world and from the possession of its goods, most of His teaching was necessarily concerned with the attitude of the believer to temporal wealth.'

But this hypothesis has been demolished by Sanday (*loc. cit.*) who says : ' . . . to suppose that the whole section must be localized there, is to misunderstand the structure and character of S. Luke's Gospel. It is far more probable that he has massed together a quantity of material derived from some special source to which he had access and which could not be easily fitted into the framework supplied to him by S. Mark.'

Another attempt has been made, on different principles, to harmonize S. Luke's narrative and that of the other evangelists. This is based on the implication of three passages to be found in these ten chapters which read as follows : ' He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem ' (ix, 51). ' He went through the cities and towns teaching, and making His journey to Jerusalem ' (xiii, 22). ' And it came to pass as He was going to Jerusalem, He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee ' (xvii, 11).

#### 4 LIFE AND TEACHING OF JESUS CHRIST

Starting from the indications here given, Wieseler thus distinguishes three different journeys: 'The journey in S. Luke ix, 51 would correspond to that taken by our Lord to keep the Feasts of Tabernacles (John, vii, 1-x, 39) and of the Dedication, concluding with a stay in Perea (John x, 40), while the mention of a journey in xiii, 22 would refer to that made from Perea to Bethania for the purpose of raising Lazarus from the dead (John xi), after which our Lord went to Ephrem. Finally, the journey we find mentioned in Luke xvii, 11 would correspond to that taken from Ephrem to Jerusalem for the last Passover (John xi, 55). On this occasion our Lord would have passed through Galilee, for the last time entering that province by Samaria—Luke xvii, 11 must be translated "by the midst of Samaria and of Galilee"—and returning to Judea by Perea (Matt. xix; Mark x).'

Godet, from whom I have borrowed this account (II, p. 4), thus sums up against the theory in question: 'We cannot concede the least probability to this view. First, these three passages from S. Luke obviously do not imply three different departures or journeys, at least in the author's mind. Second, the journey recorded in ix, 51 would have had to take place with the greatest publicity, owing to the sending out of the seventy disciples, and, therefore, could not be identified with that recorded in S. John vii, 1, which was made in secret. Third, Wieseler's interpretation of xvii, 11 seems to us quite inadmissible.'

In his book on the Four Gospels,<sup>1</sup> Levesque has revived the same hypothesis of three distinct journeys, but connects them with different periods of our Lord's life. The first would be that recorded by S. John in his fifth chapter (p. 126); the second would fall between the Feasts of Tabernacles and Dedication (p. 136); while the third, which is recorded by the two other Synoptics, must be placed after the Dedication (p. 142; cp. 63). This theory has been adopted by Chaume (R.B., 1918, 515, n. 1), Buzy (ibid., 562) taking up an attitude of greater reserve.<sup>2</sup>

The whole exegetical edifice thus raised seems to us fragile in the extreme, conflicting, as it does, with the very first words of the chapters it purports to explain. Thus

<sup>1</sup> *Les Quatres Evangiles*.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. *supra*, vol. I, p. xxi. Levesque has again introduced and defended his interpretation in an article in *Revue apologetique*, August 1929, pp. 132-40.



S. Luke ix, 51 reads : ' And it came to pass, when the days of his assumption were accomplishing, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem.' It is very difficult to find here any reference to a journey preceding the death of Christ by eighteen months. To refute this objection Levesque comments as follows (p. 123) : ' We must take this statement, according to custom, as referring to the conclusion of the third part of our Lord's life, i.e. the Galilean ministry, and not to the beginning of the following period.' Nevertheless it would seem that the words in question are very closely connected with those that follow : ' And He sent messengers before His face.' Most damaging of all is the necessity of having recourse to a series of suppositions difficult to accept and which lend a very artificial character to the whole theory. We have to suppose that, in order to remain faithful to his quadripartite plan, S. Luke has deliberately omitted the topographical and chronological illustrative matter that he had collected. Thus we read : ' In order to record these journeys without interfering with the quadripartite plan consecrated by the exigencies of catechetical instruction, S. Luke has recourse to a curious procedure, which consists in narrating the facts while refraining from giving any indication of time and place, which might too openly mark our Lord's presence on the outskirts of Jerusalem, or in Jerusalem itself, before the last week of His life ' (p. 66). Later on, in his interpretation of the abbreviated Lord's Prayer (xi, 1-13), Levesque writes : ' Instead of pointing out the scene of action as he generally does in the first part of his Gospel, S. Luke uses a vague expression ; *cum esset in quodam loco orans*. This phrase *in quodam loco* is intentionally lacking in precision, in the same way that the *quoddam castellum*, a few verses before, is used to hide the identity of Bethania ' (p. 67). It seems very difficult to imagine that the evangelist, when he wrote like this, did so with a view to concealing the real setting, well known to himself, of the facts that he was recording ; much more probably, if he remains vague, it is because the data possessed by him did not allow him to be more definite.

We shall not, therefore, try to determine the time and place of events, where this has not been done by S. Luke himself. Doubtless in the incidents recorded by him there are quite a number of details which had reached him without any indications of this kind, and which he has

## 6 LIFE AND TEACHING OF JESUS CHRIST

grouped together according to the analogy of the subjects to which they refer. We lay no claim to have recovered the real order of these events. So far as the present point of discussion, the departure for Jerusalem (ix, 51), is concerned, we shall place it not before but after the Feast of Tabernacles and before Dedication. Consequently, from this point on, we take S. John as our guide.

‘After these things,’ records the evangelist, ‘Jesus walked in Galilee, for He would not walk in Judea, because the Jews sought to kill Him. Now the Jews’ feast of tabernacles was at hand. And His brethren said to Him : Pass from hence and go into Judea : that Thy disciples also may see Thy works which Thou dost. For there is no man that doth anything in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If Thou do these things, manifest Thyself to the world. For neither did His brethren believe in Him. Then Jesus said to them : My time is not yet come : but your time is always ready. The world cannot hate you : but Me it hateth : because I give testimony of it, that the works thereof are evil. Go you up to this festival day, but I go not up to this festival day : because My time is not accomplished. When He had said these things, He Himself stayed in Galilee. But after His brethren were gone up, then He also went up to the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret. The Jews therefore sought Him on the festival day, and said : Where is He ? And there was much murmuring among the multitude concerning Him. For some said : He is a good man. And others said : No, but He seduceth the people. Yet no man spoke openly of Him, for fear of the Jews.’ (John vii, 1-13.)

From this very first paragraph we are gripped by the life and action of the narrative. Here are our Lord’s brethren with their vulgar ambition and lack of faith ; surging passionately around Him, the crowd, whose low-voiced discussion—‘for fear of the Jews’—we seem to overhear ; the leaders of the people, whom S. John calls specifically ‘the Jews,’ and who from this time on are determined on the Saviour’s death ; and last, and above all, Jesus Himself, dominating events and marching with a firm step to death. All this seems to live and move before our eyes and it will fill the whole stage during these last six months.

We are already acquainted with our Lord's 'brothers,' to whom S. John refers here. S. Augustine (1623) recalls them to his hearers' minds in words like these : 'Understand the term brothers in the sense already familiar to you ; for the expression is not a new one to your ears. The relatives of the Virgin Mary were called brothers of our Lord.' We still have in mind the scheme concocted by these 'brothers' of Jesus that led them to Capharnaum to take Him away from His ministry and bring Him back to Nazareth (*supra*, vol. I, 236). Since then, many of our Lord's utterances and miracles must have affected them, but such self-revelation was always tempered with the reserve that was a rule with Him, but which was unintelligible to them. 'If anyone wants to make himself known,' they would say in their clumsy common sense, 'let him openly show himself to the world at large.' It was in this spirit that they sought Jesus at the present juncture ; they had noticed that He was not appearing in Galilee with the same freedom as before, and the mystery with which He was always half enveloped was being more and more strictly maintained. They understood nothing of this reserve and they wished to provoke a decisive manifestation, rather like the Jews who would soon be saying in Jerusalem : 'How long wilt Thou hold us in suspense ?'

Our Lord's reply is a mysterious one : 'My time is not yet come.' For Him this 'time' was always that of His Passion ; for His 'brothers' it was that of His glorious manifestation. In reality it was both at the same time, for it was by His death that Christ was to reveal Himself and draw all men to Him. For this glorious manifestation which, in spite of themselves, the Jews will be instrumental in bringing about, the time is not yet ripe, and so He will continue to hide Himself for the present. As for His 'brothers,' let them go without let or hindrance, the world cannot hate them and they run no risks. In the same spirit Jesus will later on tell His disciples :

'If the world hate you, know ye that it hath hated Me before you. If you had been of the world, the world would love its own : but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.' (John xv, 18, 19.)

## 8 LIFE AND TEACHING OF JESUS CHRIST

### II. *The Feast of Tabernacles.*

This Feast of Tabernacles, which our Lord's 'brothers' wished to make Him attend, was one of the most solemn of those observed in the Jewish religion, Josephus even calling it 'the pre-eminently great and holy feast' (A.J., VIII, 4, 1, 100).<sup>1</sup> Early on the 14th Tishri (the end of September or the beginning of October), the pilgrims—many from the most remote parts of the country—began to arrive. At that period of the year, when harvesting was over and the temperature was becoming moderate, transport was easier than at the time of the Passover and especially of the Dedication. Hospices were to be found on all sides and were crowded. Booths made of boughs sprang up rapidly on every hand, in the courtyards and on the roofs, reminding the Israelites of their fathers who had dwelt so long in tents. 'The olive, the pine, the myrtle and the palm were stripped of their branches; shelters made of boughs were set up in the streets and the squares, on the flat roofs of mansions and the city walls, so that Jerusalem looked like a forest of verdant green.'<sup>2</sup> In obedience to the precept: 'You shall take to you on the first day the fruits of the fairest tree, and branches of palm trees and boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and you shall rejoice before the Lord your God' (Lev. xxiii, 40), each Israelite held in his right hand the *Lulab*, a bundle composed of a palm with some blades of willow and myrtle, and the *Ethrog*, which consisted of a citron, in his left. Raising these aloft they waved them towards the four points of the compass, while the strains of the Hallel<sup>3</sup> rose up to Heaven.

The joy displayed was all the more lively, since the Feast of Tabernacles was preceded by the great Day of Atonement. In all this forest of verdure, only the sombre mass of the Antonia stood out in contrast; there at the Temple gate were the heathen, and not only so, but they were masters as well.

These traditional ceremonies bore a symbolic meaning which not only recalled the noble memories of the past, but also brought the future to mind. The seventy bulls destined for sacrifice represented the seventy nations of the Pagan world; while the streams of water flowing copiously

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Billerbeck, Exkurs, *Das Laubhüttenfest*, II, pp. 774-812.

<sup>2</sup> Fouard, II, 49.    <sup>3</sup> Bonsirven, *Sur les ruines du Temple*, p. 242.

on every side signified the outpouring of the Holy Spirit of God. At night the Temple was illuminated, and at the first rays of dawn the Levites, forming a circle round two priests, went up to the top of the fifteen steps separating the Court of Israel from the Court of the Women. Immediately at cockcrow the two priests blew their silver trumpets three times, repeating the same triple blast on the tenth step, and yet once again when the Court of the Women was reached. Then, sounding their trumpets all the time, they crossed this court to the Beautiful Gate. Arrived there they turned and, looking towards the west, in the direction of the Holy of holies, they said : ' Our Fathers, who stood in this place, turned their backs to the sanctuary of Jehovah and their faces to the east, since they adored the rising sun ; but we, with our eyes turned towards Jehovah, belong solely to Him.' By this solemn oath, taken on the very threshold of the Court of the Gentiles upon which their backs were turned, the priests, in the name of the entire nation whose representatives they were, swore to Jehovah that they rejected all the superstitions of the pagans and that they would have none but Him.

No doubt these glorious memories were often sullied by acts of licence, of which the story of the woman taken in adultery furnishes an example, and the protestations of exclusive fidelity to the God of Israel were joined in many cases to a blind obstinacy which was soon to result in the rejection and condemnation of the Messias ; but in spite of all this, we have here an august and holy ceremony, and we can well believe that it was with a thrill of emotion that our Blessed Lord took part in it with His people for the last time.

The celebrations lasted eight days, but our Lord was not there at the beginning, arriving only in the middle of the Feast. Still everyone was talking about Him, not daring to take sides openly on account of the attitude of the scribes who, it is true, had not openly condemned Jesus, but who made their hostility clear enough, and intimidated the rest. ' At every turn,' says S. Chrysostom (274), ' we see that the leaders are corrupt while the judgement of the people is sound enough ; only they lacked the courage to maintain it.' Perhaps this is too optimistic a view ; at that period and in Jerusalem, it is by no means certain that the people would have been won for Christ ; on the other hand

it is quite certain that almost all their chiefs were hostile to Him.<sup>1</sup>

This uncertain attitude of the people throws light on S. Peter's reply to our Lord at Cæsarea Philippi, where he was only repeating the opinion of those who were saying : 'He is a good man,' and even among them how much ignorance and uncertainty there was ! But there is much worse than this, for there were those who said : 'He is a seducer,' which is what the priests were to say about Him after His death (Matt. xxvii, 63). And yet they had only to look at His record of teaching and miracles during two whole years ! Cyril of Alexandria recalls the Psalmist's words : 'O taste and see how that the Lord is sweet !' 'Still for that,' he adds, 'one must have a sound taste.'<sup>2</sup>

However, in the middle of the Feast, Jesus did go up to the Temple, and began to teach, a fact that, as formerly at Nazareth, aroused the greatest surprise, reflected in the question : 'How doth this man know letters, having never learned ?'<sup>3</sup> Our Lord made use of this astonishment to bring His hearers face to face with a still higher mystery : 'My doctrine,' He replied, 'is not Mine, but His that sent Me.' S. Chrysostom and, still more, S. Augustine, in drawing out the meaning of our Lord's words, shows how, in His Person, there meet the two elements of union with, and at the same time dependence upon, the Father : 'What,' says S. Augustine, 'is the teaching of the Father if not the Word

<sup>1</sup> Augustine observes here (1628) : 'Qui non loquebantur de illo propter metum Iudaeorum ? Utique qui dicebant, Bonus est ; non qui dicebant : Seducit turbas. Qui dicebant, Seducit turbas, sonitus eorum audiebatur tamquam aridorum foliorum. Seducit turbas, clarius sonabant : Bonus est, pressius susurrabant : Modo autem, fratres, quamvis nondum venerit illa gloria Christi quæ nos æternos factura est ; modo tamen ita crescit Ecclesia eius, ita eam dignatus est per cuncta diffundere, ut iam susurratur, Seducit turbas ; et clarius personet, Bonus est.'

<sup>2</sup> These same contradictory judgements are expressed to-day about those who follow Christ. When it is asked whether they are good people or impostors, the question is discussed in the same way that there might be a dispute in winter as to whether a tree was alive or dead. 'So long as it is winter the matter is not clear : summer will establish the truth and test the opinions. And our summer will be when Christ is revealed' (S. Augustine, 1627).

<sup>3</sup> 'Multi noverant ubi natus, quem ad modum fuerit educatus ; numquam eum viderant litteras discentem, audiebant autem de Lege disputantem, Legis testimonia proferentem, quæ nemo posset proferre nisi legisset, nemo legere nisi litteras didicisset : et ideo mirabantur' (Augustine, 1628-9).

S. Cyril takes the opportunity of pointing to the infinite Wisdom innate in our Lord, from which all our wisdom has its source. (657-660.)

of the Father ? Therefore Christ is the teaching of the Father, if He is the Father's Word. But, since the Word must necessarily be the word of someone, He asserts at the same time that His teaching is Himself, and yet that it is not His own, because He is the Word of the Father. For what is so much your own as yourself : and yet what less, since your being is derived from another ? <sup>1</sup> Our Lord Himself calls on us to put His doctrine to the test if we wish to judge it : ' If any man,' He says, ' will do the will of him, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself ' (John vii, 17).

We find a similar idea in John iii, 21, where we read : ' But he that doth truth cometh to the light ' ; once more He refers His hearers to their experience as the test : ' Let them do the will of God and they will be able to judge if the doctrine is of God.' S. Augustine's explanation of the matter is as follows :

' What is meant by doing God's will ? It is to do what pleases Him. " This is the will of God, to believe in Him whom He hath sent." To believe in Him ; not merely to believe Him : for if you believe in a person you believe Him, but it does not follow that if you believe a person you believe in him. We believe Paul, but we do not believe in Paul : we believe Peter, but we do not believe in Peter. . . . What does it mean, then, to believe in Him ? It means to love and cherish Him, to approach Him and be incorporated in Him all the time that you believe in Him. This is the faith that God requires of us . . . not any sort of faith, but a faith that works by charity ; let this faith be yours and you will be able to judge the doctrine ; and what will your judgement be ? Surely, that this doctrine is not mine but His who sent me, that is, you will judge that Christ is the Son of God, and His teaching the Father's ' (1631).

We recognize here our Lord's own teaching in His discourse on the Bread of Life. The believer is he who

<sup>1</sup> After having insisted on these ineffable relationships S. Augustine concludes : ' If we have understood, God be praised ; but if anyone has grasped but little, at any rate man has done what he could, so as to see from whence comes his hope. We are but labourers who plant and water from without ; but God gives the increase. . . . Do you wish to understand ? Then believe. For God has said by the Prophet, unless ye believe ye shall not understand ' (1629-30).

comes to Christ, knows Him and judges of His teaching and bears witness to it.

The next argument<sup>1</sup> is of less logical force ; as Maldonatus remarks : 'Morale, non necessarium est.' Since Christ does not seek His own glory it is clear that He is a disinterested ambassador and we are ready to recognize the truth of what He says, and that He only hands on the message He has received from Him whose glory is the exclusive preoccupation of His life.

Having thus disclosed the title of His mission, Jesus himself takes the offensive. 'Why,' He asks, 'seek you to kill Me?' No doubt, from this time on, the chiefs of the people are laying their plot for our Lord's destruction ; but as yet, this fact is unknown to the people at large, who consequently see in His question nothing but the fruit of a mad delusion. While the better-informed hold their peace, the crowd cry : 'Thou hast a devil.' This is the odious accusation circulated by the scribes and we meet it in Jerusalem without surprise.

This opposition of the Jews to our Lord had been aggravated, more than in any other way, by the cure of the paralytic on the Sabbath day. Therefore, Jesus recalled this miraculous work, the memory of which was still vivid in the capital, and justified it by the authority of Moses himself. Such a possible conflict with the law of the Sabbath rest had not been foreseen in the only passage relating to circumcision in the Mosaic code (Lev. xii, 3), but in practice the Jews gave the law of circumcision precedence over that of the Sabbath. Surely, then, our Lord reasons, He had the right to heal a man on the Sabbath, all the more since such a cure involved, not the body only, but the soul as well (cp. v, 14). The Jews should have judged by the real facts and not by appearance alone.

'Some therefore of Jerusalem said : Is not this He whom they seek to kill ? And behold, He speaketh openly : and they say nothing to Him. Have the rulers known for a truth that this is the Christ ?' (John vii, 25, 26.)

At this point it is the inhabitants of Jerusalem who come most into the picture. They knew the plans of their leaders better than anyone else, and were therefore surprised to see

<sup>1</sup> 'He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory : but he that seeketh the glory of him that sent him, he is true . . .' (John vii, 18).



our Lord speaking thus freely in the Temple. They could not understand why He was let alone, and even asked themselves if, after all, the authorities recognized Him as the Christ. We meet here that passive docility which was the chief cause of the subjection of the Jews to the scribes and Pharisees ; if our Lord had been acknowledged by these masters of theirs, the whole people would have followed suit ; a fact that implies a tremendous responsibility for the leaders, and makes our Blessed Lord's patience with the people and His compassion for them easy to understand, for they were truly as sheep without a shepherd. However, they insist that this cannot be the Christ, for, while no one knows from whence the Messias will come, the origin of this man was well known. Later, Tryphon will argue in the same sense with Justin (*Dial.*, 8, cp. 110) : ' Even,' he says, ' when the Messias is actually born and residing somewhere, He will be unknown and even unconscious of His own identity, until Elias comes to anoint Him and make Him known to all.'<sup>1</sup>

More powerful, possibly, than these dreams of a hidden Messias was the impression, unanalysed perhaps, but irresistible to many, that He who was expected, and upon whom rested the whole hope of the nation, could not be this man whose humble origin, family connections and past life were well known. It is, in another form the objection raised by the people of Nazareth : ' Is not this the carpenter's son ? Is not His mother called Mary, and His brethren James and Joseph and Simon and Jude ? And His sisters, are they not all with us ? '

In replying to this objection, of which, although unexpressed, He was fully aware, our Lord made no reference to His birth at Bethlehem. Neither this nor His Davidic descent were in question at the moment, but only His Divine origin and mission in the world. They thought they knew Him and from whence He sprang, when in reality they had not the faintest suspicion of the true source of His Being or of the authority that He possessed. Really, what they did not know was, from whom He proceeded and from whom His mission was derived. ' But I know Him,' He adds—a supreme affirmation that He is to repeat many times and which is the first principle of His polemic against the Jews as recorded by S. John. ' Neither Me do you

<sup>1</sup> Cp. 4 Esdras xiii, 52 ; Billerbeck, II, 489.

know, nor My Father. If you did know Me, perhaps you would know My Father also' (viii, 19). 'It is My Father that glorifieth Me, of whom you say that He is your God. And you have not known Him : but I know Him. And if I shall say that I know Him not, I shall be like to you, a liar' (viii, 54-55). He speaks in the same sense in S. Matthew's Gospel : 'And no one knoweth the Son, but the Father : neither doth anyone know the Father, but the Son and he to whom it shall please the Son to reveal Him' (Matt. xi, 27).

This statement was understood well enough, at least by our Lord's enemies ; so much so that they wished to seize Him, but could not do so, for 'His hour was not yet come. But of the people many believed in Him and said : When the Christ cometh, shall He do more miracles than these which this man doth ?' (John, vii, 30-31).

Those who had been already whispering : 'He is a good man,' now made so bold as to ask : 'Is not this the Messiah ?' but in a low voice owing to the constant fear that their leaders inspired. They were moved by the proof everywhere appealed to in the Gospels, namely, that drawn from our Lord's miracles. Surely, it was asked, the Messiah Himself could not work more ? There is no special reference here to the recent cure of the paralytic of Bethsaida, but to miracles of Jesus in general. Probably these people were not inhabitants of Jerusalem at all, but men from Galilee, who had seen many miracles there, the impression of which was still strong in their minds.

It was only a whisper, but it did not pass unnoticed by our Lord's enemies, who were ever on the watch, and it was then that they took the step of sending their emissaries to seize Him, probably giving them instructions not to take Him at once but to use the first favourable opportunity of doing so ; they feared the mob, just as the mob feared them.

Our Lord took notice of all this vile plotting. It did not disturb Him, but He duly warned those whom He was so soon to leave. He was about to return to His Father, and men would seek Him and find Him not. As usual the Jews—whose impression S. John records—utterly missed our Lord's point ; they made a jest of it, and ironically remarked : 'Whither will He go that we shall not find Him ? Will He go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles and teach the Gentiles ?' Coming from them, it was a

mere gibe : the very idea of a Messias abandoning Israel for the Gentiles ! yet this was the Divine plan, and S. John deliberately narrates the incident, just as later on he will record the unconscious prophecy of the High Priest announcing Christ's approaching death for the people.

In commenting on this passage, the Fathers, and especially S. Cyril (745-748), recall the ceremonies of the Feasts, and show how our Lord interpreted the old covenant types, at the same time raising them to a higher plane.

The rite of libation is described in the Mishnah.<sup>1</sup> After the sacrifice had been offered, a priest, followed by all the people, went down from the Temple to the fountain of Siloe, where he filled a pitcher made of gold. The procession then returned, being saluted on the way by three blasts of the horn, of which the first and third were brief and the second prolonged. Then the priest, ascending the staircase on the south side of the Altar of Burnt Offerings, turned to the left, that is, to the west. There he found ready two silver vases pierced with holes, into which he poured wine and water respectively. This solemn libation was celebrated on each of the eight days of the Feast, even on the Sabbath, but then the procession was omitted, the water having been drawn from Siloe the day before.

In elucidating the meaning of this ceremony, reference was often made to Isaias xii, 3 : 'You shall draw waters with joy out of the Saviour's fountains,' and, indeed, the whole feast was radiant with joy. 'He who has not tasted of the joys of this feast, has never known joy in his life.'<sup>2</sup>

This ceremony of the Libation recalled the Rock in the Wilderness, at which the chosen people quenched their thirst, a miracle which is more directly the subject of our Lord's own words than the Temple rite we have just described, which was merely a ceremony of libation, while in the desert man could draw near and drink. And it is to do this that Christ invites all who believe in Him : 'If any man thirst, let him come to Me and drink.' As S. Cyril reminds us, the Psalmist thus addresses Almighty God : '... the children of men shall put their trust under the covert of Thy wings. They shall be inebriated with the plenty of Thy house ; and Thou shalt make them drink of the torrent of Thy pleasure' (xxxv, 8). While in Isaias we

<sup>1</sup> *Sukka*, esp. IV, 9. Cp. Billerbeck, II, 799 ff. ; Moore, *Judaism*, II, p. 44.

<sup>2</sup> *Sukka*, V, 1. Cp. Billerbeck, I, 806.

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read : ' Behold I will bring upon her, as it were a river of peace . . . as an overflowing torrent ' (lxvi, 12). . . . Still more explicitly is this image of the rock adopted by S. Paul : ' And they did all eat the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. And they drank of the spiritual rock that followed them : and the rock was Christ ' (1 Cor. x, 3, 4).

Here we see once again how, according to S. John, all the Old Testament types are recalled and interpreted by our Lord : the Temple (ii), the brazen serpent (iii), the manna (vi), the rock (vii), the cloud (viii), and finally the paschal lamb (xix).

In our Blessed Lord's discourses of preceding days, as the evangelist records them, He replies to the attacks of His enemies, but here, ignoring these, He addresses those who believe in Him and, as previously to the Samaritan woman and the Jews at Capharnaum, He promises them life eternally renewed, under the figure of living water in rivers from their breast. S. Augustine's commentary on this passage is as follows : ' Man's breast is here to be understood as his conscience, which, purified by this heavenly draught, revives. In drawing it he finds, nay, he becomes himself, a spring. And what is this spring, this river flowing from the depths of the inner man ? It is the beneficence with which he comes to his neighbour's aid ; for if he thinks that this refreshing draught is for him alone, no longer will the living water flow from his breast ; but if, on the other hand, he hastens to his neighbour's help, it flows, nor can it any more run dry. . . . In this way everyone can test whether he is really drinking and living by what he drinks ; for the stream will not abandon us unless we first abandon the stream ' (1643).

And likewise S. Chrysostom (284) : ' He calls grace living water because it is always flowing, for the grace of the Holy Spirit, when it enters and dwells in a soul, wells up with greater vigour than any other spring, never ceasing to flow, never drying, never failing in its supply. And our Lord, in order to characterize this inexhaustible gift, this ineffable force, calls it a spring, and also rivers ; not merely a river, but rivers innumerable ; and He calls it living water to emphasise its buoyancy and strength. To understand this well, let us think of Stephen's wisdom, of Peter's readiness of speech, of Paul's driving force. Nothing was strong enough to

hold in or stop their onward march ; neither the wrath of peoples, nor the violence of tyrants, nor the attacks of demons, nor the mortifications of every day ; but as rivers are driven by the force of some mighty current, so they swept everything before them.'

'As yet,' S. John adds, 'the Spirit was not given, because Jesus was not yet glorified,'<sup>1</sup> and in point of fact it was not until after His resurrection that our Lord said to His Apostles : 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost.' No doubt the Spirit had already been given to the Old Testament prophets and to Simeon, Anne, and John the Baptist ; but, as S. John Chrysostom remarks, He was given to individuals only, and without the abundance of gifts that signalized the beginning of Christianity. Nor was there any power of passing on the gift to others.<sup>2</sup>

During these few days our Lord's discourses have already borne fruit ; those who were favourably disposed to Him were strengthened in their attitude, and, no longer content with saying 'He is a good man,' they are now exclaiming 'He is the Prophet,' 'He is the Christ.' All those contradictory opinions quoted by S. Peter at Cæsarea Philippi can be heard competing with each other here. Those who do not believe, bring forward as an objection the circumstances of our Lord's birth. Already at the very beginning of His public life, Nathanael had asked : 'Can any thing of good come from Nazareth ?' These people repeat the same thought : 'Doth the Christ come out of Galilee ?' ; and they recall the promises made to David. To their objection John gives no reply ; a fact that has led some to the perverse conclusion that he knew nothing of our Lord's birth at

<sup>1</sup> By the glorification of Christ, referred to here, is meant the sum-total of the events, both sorrowful and glorious, by which His works here below and our salvation were accomplished ; and which are usually referred to under this aspect by S. John ; cp. xii, 32 : 'And I, if I be lifted up from the earth will draw all things to myself.' xii, 23 : 'The hour is come, that the Son of Man should be glorified.' xiii, 31 : 'When he therefore was gone out, Jesus said : Now is the Son of Man glorified ; and God is glorified in Him.' xvi, 14 ; xvii, 5. And Westcott adds : 'By this use of the phrase the Evangelist brings out clearly the absolute divine unity of the works of Christ in His whole "manifestation" (1 John iii, 5, 8 ; i, 2) which he does not, like S. Paul, regard as distinct stages of humiliation and exultation.'

<sup>2</sup> In the same sense Augustine writes (1645) : 'Before our Lord had been glorified by the resurrection of His flesh, we find no uncertain signs of the presence of the Holy Ghost. It was not another Spirit that was received by the prophets who had foretold the coming of Christ. But the Spirit was to be given in quite a different way than of old, and that is the point here.'

Bethlehem ; Westcott says : ‘ It seems strange that anyone should have argued from this passage that the writer of the Gospel was unacquainted with Christ’s birth at Bethlehem. He simply relates the words of the multitude who were unacquainted with it (cp. Luke iv, 23) ; and there is a tragic irony in the fact that the condition which the objectors ignorantly assumed to be unsatisfied was actually satisfied ’ (*Gospel according to St. John*, 1908, I, p. 280, note).

Amidst all this impassioned discussion, the agents of the Jewish authorities either dared not or could not find the opportunity that they sought of arresting Christ ; they then returned to their masters saying : ‘ Never man spake like this man.’ S. Chrysostom (287) sees in these words the avowal of a sincere acceptance of Jesus—of a true conversion, in short ; but perhaps this is too much to say. These men had felt the overpowering influence of our Lord’s incomparable teaching, as the mob had often done before, but they were still far from being really convinced. Their leaders visited them with scornful rebukes, and brought forward their own line of conduct as a decisive argument ; and indeed it is at this decisive stage of our Lord’s life that the terrible responsibility of the priests and Pharisees is most clearly seen. In this connection S. Cyril (708–709) recalls the words of Jeremias (x, 21) : ‘ Because the pastors have done foolishly and have not sought the Lord : therefore have they not understood and all their flock is scattered.’ Throughout the whole affair we see the people looking to their leaders for guidance, asking them questions, trying to understand their attitude, quite ready to believe if they wish it. But these chiefs of the people keep to themselves, despising and condemning the common herd.

Nicodemus, it is true, makes a timid attempt to intervene and is promptly referred to the Scripture without the slightest attempt even to discuss our Lord’s credentials and claims. They judge and condemn Him on the ground of His origin : He is a Galilean ; thus furnishing one more example of the way in which the world rejects as folly the very Wisdom of God.

### III. *The Woman taken in Adultery.* (John vii, 53–viii, 11.)

This story, at once so familiar to Christian piety and so moving in itself, raises some grave questions of textual criticism. If we consult the writings of those Greek Fathers

who have commented on S. John, i.e. notably S. Chrysostom and S. Cyril of Alexandria, we notice that they pass directly from chap. vii, 52 to viii, 12, without appearing even to suspect the existence of this section; the same is true of Tertullian and S. Cyprian, but with S. Ambrose and S. Augustine its authenticity is not in doubt. Nor is the testimony of the manuscripts any more unanimous on the point. It is not in the best Greek manuscripts, although D and other ancient Greek and Latin manuscripts have it; and even in these it is not always found in the same place. In some it forms an appendix at the end of the Gospel; in another it is put after vii, 36, before the end of the section on the Feast of Tabernacles; and others assign it to S. Luke.<sup>1</sup>

This uncertainty in the tradition on the subject had already been noticed in antiquity, and is explained by S. Augustine as due to a fear that our Lord's example might be abused, by absolution in such cases being too easily given.<sup>2</sup> Certainly the decree of the Council of Trent on the integrity of the Holy Scriptures has a bearing on this subject.<sup>3</sup> 'We must then hold,' says Knabenbauer (p. 272), 'that this passage belongs to the inspired Scriptures, but that it was written by S. John is not in any way defined.'<sup>4</sup>

We need not pursue the discussion; for the story of

<sup>1</sup> The author of the *Didascalia* quotes this incident (chap. vii) but without attributing it to S. John. On this Dom Connolly writes: 'We may suppose that the author had read it either in Papias or in the gospel to the Hebrews.' (*Didascalia Apostolorum*, Oxford, 1929, p. 71.)

<sup>2</sup> *De coniugiis adulterinis*, II, 7 (40, 474): after having remarked that a husband ought to forgive his guilty but repentant wife, he goes on: 'But from this view, indeed, the general sense of unbelievers shrinks, so that some of feeble faith or rather, I should say, who are hostile to the true faith, imagine that they will make it easy for their wives to sin with impunity. Consequently, they delete from their manuscripts our Lord's act of pardon in the case of the adulterous woman; as if licence to sin would be given by Him who said: "Go, and now sin no more"; or as if the woman ought not to have been healed by the remission of her sin by the Divine Physician, lest cause of offence be given to those who are yet unhealed.'

<sup>3</sup> For I cannot follow the contrary view of Sickenberger (*Leben Jesu*, p. 183).

<sup>4</sup> Among those who reject the Johannine authorship of this passage there are some who willingly acknowledge its historical value; so Loisy, 1st ed., p. 534; cp. 2nd ed., pp. 279-81. 'The section dealing with the woman taken in adultery is, in this Gospel, an added piece, although it is a well-authorized portion of the Gospel tradition . . . we are in the presence of a story which happened exactly as reported; which has no other meaning than that which follows naturally from its text and from the incident itself; which belongs to the most reliable synoptic tradition, and which is in no wise Johannine in conception. The last chapter of the Gospel is in

our Lord's life as we are trying to trace it, the incident has, on any hypothesis, an undoubted value, which fact is quite sufficient to justify the use we make of it here.<sup>1</sup>

The Mount of Olives is mentioned several times by the Synoptics in the last part of our Lord's life (Matt. xxi, 1 ; xxiv, 3 ; xxvi, 30 ; and similarly in S. Mark and S. Luke). It is not mentioned anywhere else in S. John, but, without naming it, he speaks of the garden situated on the other side of Cedron where Jesus often went with His disciples (xviii, 1-2). Doubtless it was to this spot that our Lord retired for the night, returning in the morning to the Temple, where He recommenced His work of instructing the people. As the crowd flocked to Him (cp. Luke v, 3) He sat down and began to teach. It was then that they brought to Him the woman taken in adultery.<sup>2</sup>

The aim of our Lord's enemies is clear enough, namely to bring Jesus into conflict either with popular sentiment or with the Law of Moses itself. It is a snare spread for Him, like to many others in the last weeks of His life—an effort to destroy His influence with the people—and it is the failure of all these attempts that will at last drive His opponents to violence itself. Our Lord saw through the game they were playing and treated it with contempt ; and so, remaining in the stooping attitude in which they had discovered Him, He wrote on the ground.<sup>3</sup> On another

an analogous though not identical position. . . . Chapter xxi belongs to the Gospel of John as a traditional fragment inserted into the mystical Gospel by those who procured its publication. The section on the adulterous woman is not in this category ; it does not belong even artificially to the Gospel ; it was marooned there, so to speak, some time after the book, with the appendix to its last chapter, was published ; and it remains isolated, like an old picture astray in a modern picture-gallery.'

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Lagrange, *S. Jean*, pp. 221-226 ; Durand, *S. Jean*, p. 243 ff. ; L. De Grandmaison, *Jésus Christ*, II, p. 128 ff. ; Bernard, *St. John*, p. 715-721.

<sup>2</sup> Farrar, followed by Fouard, thinks that the Feast of Tabernacles gave occasion for many disorders. This is contested by Edersheim. In any case it is a question of conjecture only, although of a probable kind. Punishment by stoning was provided by the Law in the case of an unfaithful betrothed woman (Deut. xxii, 23, 24) ; death, for an adulterous wife (Lev. xx, 10), the kind of death being unspecified. It would seem that, at this period, stoning was employed in all cases, and also that the woman brought to Jesus was merely betrothed ; these are secondary details, which in any case do not justify Edersheim's suspicious attitude to the whole narrative.

<sup>3</sup> Maldonatus explains thus : ' Mihi valde placet quod quidam dicunt, nihil scripsisse quod legi posset, nullos enim certos formasse characteres, sed incertas nihilque significantes figuras delineasse, quales homines meditabundi solent facere.'



occasion, to the man who asked Him to divide the inheritance between his brother and himself, Jesus answered : ' Man, who hath appointed Me judge or divider over you ? ' (Luke xii, 13-14). Similarly, in the present case, He brushes on one side the question put to Him : it is not for Him to judge this woman's sin or decide her fate. But as the Pharisees insist, our Lord closes the discussion with a word : ' He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.' And her accusers, seeing that their secret motive was known and having no wish to pursue the subject on such a ground, slipped away, the oldest, in their greater discretion, being the first to withdraw. Then our Lord, finding Himself alone with the woman, sat up and spoke to her. ' Where are they that accused thee ? Hath no man condemned thee ? . . . Neither will I condemn thee. Go, and now sin no more ' (John viii, 10-11).

S. Augustine loved to see in this last scene ' misery and mercy ' face to face, and he justly remarks that our Lord's judgement in the matter was, at one and the same time, merciful to the sinner and pitiless towards the sin. All this is very well put, but no amount of analysis can alter the exquisite simplicity of the narrative. As everywhere in the Gospels, Jesus appears merciful to the point of giving scandal, but at the same time sovereign Master of souls and of the Divine Law ; He can forgive the worst offence with a word, because it is against Him that they have been committed ; He is the sole creditor of all who are burdened with the debt of sin. He can pardon with a word, because in an instant He can purify and restore the soul, while men must be given surety against an only too probable relapse into the same fault ; unable to cure the soul, or even to have an exact knowledge of its state, they have to demand that the sinner shall amend his ways and give proof of his intention to do so, all of which is superfluous in the case of Him who both reads and forms the hearts of men. ' To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise ' He will say to the dying thief, and similarly He absolves and restores the erring woman with a single word.

#### IV. *Jesus the Light of the World.* (viii, 12-20.)

Our Lord's teachings recorded in this passage continue those contained in chapter vii : in neither case was He defending His position but rather explaining His nature

and function in the world. In so doing, He made use of symbols that lay to His hand in the Jewish religion itself.

The Feast of Tabernacles was finished, and the people had dispersed in all directions, only those of Jerusalem remaining to form an audience for our Lord. He was teaching in the Women's Court, where were to be seen the brilliant illuminations that were a feature of the Feast ;<sup>1</sup> but there is no need to recall the fact in order to understand His words : ' I am the light of the world.' ' The Light ' was a messianic title, and it is in this sense that we are to understand Isa. lx, 1 : ' Arise, be enlightened, O Jerusalem : for thy light is come,'<sup>2</sup> and still more clearly Isa. xlix, 6, recording words spoken by Jehovah to His servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to convert the dregs of Israel. Behold I have given thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou mayest be My salvation even to the farthest part of the earth.' Moreover, holy Simeon in the Temple had applied to the Infant Jesus the prophecy contained in his words : ' My eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples : a light to the revelation of the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel ' (Luke ii, 30-32). Again, Jesus in His turn had said to His disciples : ' You are the light of the world ' (Matt. v, 14). While we shall find the Apostle Paul, and especially John, adopting the same metaphors and applying them sometimes to Christians (Phil. ii, 15), sometimes to God Himself (1 John i, 5).

This teaching of our Lord lacks the solemn character of that which preceded it. Then the evangelist represents Jesus standing on the last day of the Feast and calling aloud to the people, like Wisdom, as described of old ; while here we have an informal conversation with those immediately surrounding Him. ' I am the light of the world. He that followeth Me walketh not in darkness, but shall have the light of life,' He says (John viii, 12), and the Pharisees interrupt Him at once with the remark : ' Thou givest testimony of Thyself. Thy testimony is not true ' (13). It is the argument of the legist whose only concern is with the form of law. In fact we find in the Mishnah the principle laid down<sup>3</sup> that : ' No man gives testimony of himself,' and it is this legal axiom with which Jesus is confronted by the Pharisees. To this He gives a double reply ; dismissing the question of form, He

<sup>1</sup> *Sukka*, V, 1 ff. Billerbeck, II, 806. <sup>2</sup> *Gen. R.*, I, 2 c. Billerbeck, I, 67.

<sup>3</sup> *Ketubot*, II, 9. Billerbeck, II, 522.

answers in substance that He and He alone knows Himself, and is therefore alone qualified to bear witness of Himself.

‘Although I give testimony of Myself, My testimony is true : for I know whence I came and whither I go. But you know not whence I come or whither I go. You judge according to the flesh : I judge not any man. And if I do judge, my judgement is true : because I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent Me. And in your law it is written that the testimony of two men is true. I am one that give testimony of Myself : and the Father that sent Me giveth testimony of Me. They said therefore to Him : Where is Thy Father ? Jesus answered : Neither Me do you know, nor My Father. If you did know Me, perhaps you would know My Father also.’ (John viii, 14-19.)

And this is what He has already said to Nicodemus : ‘. . . We speak what we know, and we testify what we have seen : and you receive not our testimony. . . . No man hath ascended into Heaven, but He that descended from Heaven, the Son of Man, who is in Heaven (iii, 11, 13).<sup>1</sup>

This testimony of Christ is luminous indeed—the very light of the world ; but ‘the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.’ As S. Augustine explains (1660), with reference to this passage, all other witnesses, Precursor and prophet, have received this light ; but since we ourselves are plunged in darkness, with eyes too weak to support the light, it is for us to follow this light of theirs.

He imagines a heathen asking, ‘Who is Christ ?’ The answer is, ‘He whom the prophets foretold.’ ‘What prophets ?’ he asks. Mention is made of Isaias, Daniel, Jeremias and the rest. ‘You have invented all that,’ he says. ‘No,’ is the answer, ‘their books are in the hands of the Jews. Thus do torches bear witness to the day because of our infirmity which cannot support the light of the Day ;

<sup>1</sup> ‘Jesus,’ says Godet, ‘is distinctly conscious of Himself as One come from and returning on high, for whom, consequently, this world’s life is only a journey with a mission of salvation to fulfil—a passage from Heaven back to Heaven. The whole Christian religion rests on this consciousness of our Lord as to His own Person, and the very heroism of faith is for us to abandon ourselves to the extraordinary testimony that He bears to Himself.’

and, as for us, we are too feeble ; likewise we are told by S. Peter : " We have the more firm prophetic word : whereunto you do well to attend, as to a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn and the day-star arise in your hearts " ' ( 2 Pet. i, 19 ).

' But,' Augustine continues, ' when Christ appears, in the presence of so great a light, torches will be needed no longer ; no more shall we read the prophets nor open the books of the Apostles, nor look for John's testimony, nor need even the Gospel itself. Of old, at the beginning, you felt the morning dew ; a ray of light shining obliquely through a chink in the wall had fallen into the darkness of your heart, but now you see the light itself. . . . Now I shall lay down this book and each one of you will return home. Together have we enjoyed this light and rejoiced in it, so that we tremble with delight. We are going to separate from each other, but from this light, never.'

The admirable passage that we have summarized here is something more than a mere pious aspiration ; it is a splendid commentary on the Gospel, with the interpretation of which we are here concerned. For to those who asked for the proof of His mission, our Lord, especially as we see Him in S. John's Gospel, gives none other than His own testimony and that of His works ; every other proof is subordinated to these.

' You sent to John,' He says (v, 33), ' and he gave testimony to the truth. But I receive not testimony from man : but I say these things, that you may be saved. . . . But I have a greater testimony than that of John : for the works which the Father hath given Me to perfect, the works themselves which I do, give testimony of Me, that the Father hath sent Me. And the Father Himself who hath sent Me hath given testimony of Me.'

And in the present passage we find the same current of ideas ; to His own testimony to Himself our Lord joins that of His Father, and uses it to show the Pharisees that He is not alone, and that He really offers them the double testimony that they require. For the rest, here was an opportunity, at once seized by Him, to lead them back to that testimony of the Father which is the supreme guarantee of

His mission. It is true that we hear of miraculous works that the Father has wrought through His Son, such as are recalled in S. John v, 36; but even this very passage distinguishes the testimony of the Father and that of the works. For there is something else beside the miracles appreciable by sight and touch; there is the interior witness of the Father Himself. It is He who revealed the Son to Peter (Matt. xvi, 17), and who draws believers to Himself (John vi, 44). Moreover, the Son possesses that infinite knowledge that, like all His being, comes to Him from His Father, and whose object is Himself. The Father knows Him absolutely (Matt. xi, 27) and communicates this knowledge to the Son; cp. v, 32: 'There is another that beareth witness of Me: and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of Me is true.' To the same intent was our Lord's later utterance (vii, 16): 'My doctrine is not Mine, but His that sent Me.'<sup>1</sup>

'Again therefore Jesus said to them: I go: and you shall seek Me. And you shall die in your sin. Whither I go, you cannot come. The Jews therefore said: Will He kill Himself, because He said: Whither I go, you cannot come? And He said to them: You are from beneath: I am from above. You are of this world: I am not of this world. Therefore I said to you that you shall die in your sins. For if you believe not that I am He, you shall die in your sin. They said therefore to Him: Who art Thou? Jesus said to them: The beginning, who also speak unto you. Many things I have to speak and to judge of you. But He that sent Me, is true: and the things that I have heard of Him, these same I speak in the world. And they understood not that He called God His Father. Jesus therefore said to them: When you shall have lifted up the Son of man, then shall you know that I am He and that I do nothing of Myself. But as the Father hath taught Me, these things I speak. And He that sent Me is with Me: and He hath not left Me alone. For I do always the things that please Him. When He spoke these things, many believed in Him.' (John viii, 21-30.)

<sup>1</sup> All this was spoken 'near the Treasury' (γαζοφυλάκιον). There were several γαζοφυλάκια in the Temple: B.J., V, 5, 2; VI, 5, 2; but there was a special one in the Women's Court (A.J., XIX, 6, 1); cp. Billerbeck, II, 37-45.

S. Augustine, commenting on these verses, reminds his hearers (1666) of the distinctive symbols of the Four Evangelists, the eagle being appropriated to S. John : ' You see,' he observes, ' that he who has been compared to the eagle could not but utter sublime things : yet we, who crawl on the earth, feeble as we are and of little account among men, dare to comment on these passages and try to explain them. We think we understand them when we meditate on them, and that we can make you understand when we try to explain them ! ' And he goes on : ' Perhaps one of you will say to me : " Leave the book alone ; why undertake what is beyond your powers ? " I reply : There are many heretics in the world . . . and in their error they have put irksome questions to the faithful, thus troubling them ; so it is very necessary that spiritual men who understand something of our Lord's divinity should fight with Christ's weapons against those of the Devil.'

If S. Augustine needed so to excuse himself before commenting on our Lord's discourses, surely it is much more necessary for us to do the same ! And our excuse can only be his, that we have our ministry to fulfil. It is certain that this eighth chapter of S. John is perhaps the most difficult as well as the most sublime of the whole Gospel, and S. Augustine's commentary, which is particularly excellent at this point, will guide us past the pitfalls that lie in our path.

However, we must dissociate ourselves from his interpretation of the opening words of the passage in question, where he understands our Lord's statement ' You shall seek Me ' as referring to the Jews' pursuit of Jesus in order to kill Him. It seems more likely that the allusion is to the despairing effort of those who have lost their Saviour and are seeking in vain to find Him again. No doubt our Lord means to condemn them, but still they should already have believed in Him, and in default of this faith they will die in their sins. Really, they belong to a different world from Him ; He is from above, they are from beneath ; and it is faith alone that can make them pass from the one state to the other ; without that, they will remain ' beneath,' far from the Saviour, who will be inaccessible to them. This opposition had already been emphasized by Christ in His interview with Nicodemus : ' No man,' He said, ' hath ascended into heaven but He that descended from heaven,'

and He went on to say : ' As Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up : that whosoever believeth in Him may not perish, but may have life everlasting.' And now that He is discussing these subjects afresh, He returns to the same point : ' When you shall have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall you know that I am He.' And once more, for this faith would be required ; but he who should possess this faith in Him would have eternal life and would know Him as the Son of Man.

But while Jesus is speaking to them, there in the Temple, they are far enough from this knowledge, and they only reply : ' Who art Thou ? ' Our Lord's reply has been interpreted in many different ways. In the Latin versions, following the Vulgate, we often get the translation : ' (I am) the beginning (principium), who also speak unto you.' But this is not the sense of the Greek text, where the words are an adverbial phrase, meaning, ' to begin with,' or ' first of all.' This is S. Chrysostom's interpretation (293) : ' You are altogether unworthy to hear My words, and much more to know who I am.' Similarly, S. Cyril of Alexandria interprets (817) : ' I receive nothing but dishonour at your hands, although all I say is for your salvation . . . and I ought to have expected it from the moment that I began to speak to you . . . ' or, again, alternatively, ' I ought not even to have begun to speak to you, but should rather have kept my words for those who are inclined to profit by them.' The same general sense underlies all these interpretations, namely, a kind of disheartened questioning : ' First of all, why do I speak to you at all ? ' <sup>1</sup> The witness of these statements of our Lord was not without its effect, for many believed on Him, but with a timid and tottering faith.

The discourse recorded by S. John (31-47) here runs parallel to that on the Bread of Life. On that occasion the men of Galilee had been won by the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves, but were unable to receive our Lord's exalted teaching on His heavenly origin and on the life He gives to men ; scandalized, they left Him. Then, too, large numbers of Jews were moved by Jesus' words, and believed,

<sup>1</sup> Fr. Condamin (*Revue biblique*, 1899, 409-12) gives a slightly different interpretation of this passage. ' " You ask Me who I am. First of all, what do you mean ? Do you ask what is the source of My teaching ? That is what you should ask first, for it is My words that bear testimony of Me. My teaching is from My Father, and proves My divine mission." The

but with a superficial faith, and the word had 'no place in' them (37). So when He first puts His teaching before them they accept it eagerly—but with a precarious allegiance that soon ends in violent opposition. This very conflict throws a powerful light on our Lord's history and teaching.

The very first words are themselves a revelation: 'If you continue in My word, you shall be My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth: and the truth shall make you free.'<sup>1</sup>

S. Augustine writes: 'What appeal can I make to your charity? Oh, if only our hearts aspired, be it ever so feebly, to this unspeakable glory! Oh, if with groans we felt that we are but pilgrims, if we were without love for the world, if only we knocked unceasingly and with pious souls at the gate of heaven, ever ready to open to us! Our desires and our heart are one: we shall receive within us this God, if we extend this desire as far as we can. . . . Love, then, together with me! He loves money little who loves God. Alas, when I speak like this I feel my own weakness, and I dare not say that such a man does not love money, but that he does not love it much; as if forsooth, money were worthy to be loved, but not much. Oh! if we loved God as He deserves we should not love money at all. . . . If this is your case, lift up your heart, for indeed you may, and listen to me! if it be thus with you, you will obtain His promises. This is not beyond you, for His hand is powerful and it is He who calls you' (1691).

These fervent aspirations uplift every Christian heart; but the Jews to whom our Lord was speaking did not understand such language at all, and were only moved to indignation at His words. 'We are the seed of Abraham: and we have never been slaves to any man. How sayest

rest of the discourse is a splendid development of this idea.' He rejects the interpretation of the Greek commentators. 'If,' he says 'the sentiment expressed is really this: "You do not deserve to be told who I am; why should I speak to you at all? You are not worthy to understand My words": we are surprised to see the discussion last so long after that.' But this objection scarcely seems decisive, and we may compare with the present passage Matt. xvii, 16: 'O unbelieving and perverse generation, how long shall I suffer you? where immediately after this severe rebuke He adds: 'Bring (the child) hither to Me.'

<sup>1</sup> S. Augustine says (1690): 'Quid enim? non illam cognoverant, quando Dominus loquebatur? si non cognoverant, quomodo crediderunt? Non quia cognoverunt crediderunt, sed ut cognoscerent crediderunt,' and then he goes on to develop afresh the relationship between Faith and knowledge: *fides quærens intellectum*.



thou : You shall be free ? ' The discussion that followed was to turn almost entirely on this descent from Abraham, of which the Jews made so perverse a boast. In the discourse about the Bread of Life, it was Moses that the Jews opposed to Christ as the great wonderworker and lawgiver of Israel ; but here it is Abraham, the Father of all Israel. S. John the Baptist had already contested the Jewish claims in this respect : ' Think not to say : we have Abraham for our Father. For I tell you that God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham ' (Matt. iii, 9) ; while later on S. Paul, in his turn, will lay it down that Abraham is the father of those who believe, whether Jew or Gentile, circumcised or uncircumcised (Rom. iv, 11). This teaching, from which later on the Jews were to shrink in horror, was not less shocking to them at the moment, and all the more because our Lord laid it down with an authority more absolute than any that Precursor or Apostle could possess.

From His first word He makes His position perfectly clear. . . . ' Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.' So the freedom of which He has just spoken is in no sense something inherited by birth, rather it is a moral disposition of which a man's works are at once the means of development and the test. This idea that every good man is free, and every bad one a slave, is one of the familiar theses of stoicism, and the moralists of the Porch—such as Philo—vie with each other in developing it. But the special feature of our Lord's teaching on the point is, that He promises freedom to those who follow Him and receive His word. In no sense does He seek to call forth a spontaneous movement of the soul which would be sufficient to bring freedom of itself, such as the Pelagians, those true disciples of the Stoics, dreamed of later on ; but, although the soul could not free itself, He, the Son of God, could set it free. And S. Augustine recalls the fact that men born free, but who had been cast into slavery by some act of wicked violence, had recourse to the Church, supplicating the Bishop to give them the freedom to which they had a right.

' Let us then flee to Christ,' Augustine cries (1694), ' let us appeal against sin to God our deliverer ; let us beseech Him to ransom us, and that by His Blood. For the Lord hath told us : You were sold gratis, and you shall be redeemed without money (Isa. lii, 3). For it is not you

that pay the price, saith the Lord, but I. He Himself has paid the price, not in money, but by His Blood.'

So the discussion went on, and became more and more embittered, the Jews indignantly repeating that they were the sons of Abraham and that they had God for their Father, and Jesus replying that they did not the works of Abraham, nor received the word of God and that therefore their father was the Devil.<sup>1</sup> Among our Lord's replies to His opponents we particularly observe the challenge : ' Which of you convinceth Me of sin ? ' If His enemies are slaves, it is because they commit sin : if He could be convicted of doing so, He who has given Himself as deliverer, the whole proof of His mission would be ruined, but He challenges them so to convict Him. To issue such a challenge, under such circumstances, to people whom He had accused of being sons of the Devil, and who were about to reply that He Himself was possessed, reveals the most inveterate self-confidence on our Lord's part ; and this self-confidence is more enlightening than the challenge itself. He has a much stronger sense of sin than His adversaries, and He declares Himself free from it. We have here an assurance beyond compare.

' The Jews therefore answered and said to Him : Do not we say well that Thou art a Samaritan and hast a devil ? Jesus answered : I have not a devil : but I honour My Father. And you have dishonoured Me. But I seek not My own glory : there is one that seeketh and judgeth.' (John viii, 48-50.)

In his first Epistle, S. Peter puts before his readers the example of Christ : ' Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth. Who when He was reviled did not revile : when He suffered He threatened not, but delivered Himself to Him that judged Him unjustly ' (ii, 22, 23).

The characteristic meekness of Christ, in face of the worst possible insults, is especially noticeable in this part of the narrative : ' Thou art a Samaritan and hast a devil,' they

<sup>1</sup> Godet (107) writes : ' Ever since the return from the captivity, a union with a heathen woman was looked on as impure, and the issue of such a marriage as illegitimate, as belonging through one of its parents to the family of Satan, the god of the heathen. It is probably in this sense that the Jews said : We have one Father, even God. They are born in the normal conditions of their theocracy, without a drop of idolatrous blood in their veins ; Hebrews of the Hebrews (Phil. i, 3-5). Thus, even when at our Lord's instance they rise to the moral point of view, they cannot entirely free themselves from their idea of physical filiation.'

scream at Him, while He abandons Himself to the protection of Almighty God who has His cause in hand. Beyond doubt Christ bears witness to Himself, but only when moved to do so by His Father, and this inspiration which is His guide in all things is the rule that governs His self-manifestation to men. In this sense, the initiative of such manifestations lies with the Father ; He it is who reveals Him to men, and bears witness to Him before them.

Whoever receives this testimony will find in it life eternal ; it is the great gift of the Son of God, which He has solemnly promised, more especially in the discourse on the Bread of Life. To unbelieving men it was a shock, as it is still a stumbling-block to them to-day. And the ground of offence is always the same. 'Art Thou greater than our father Jacob?' cries the Samaritan woman ; while the Jews of Capernaum confronted Him with Moses and the manna. And the Jews of Jerusalem follow the same line of reasoning : 'Abraham is dead, and the prophets . . . art Thou greater than our father Abraham . . . ? Who makest Thou Thyself?'

Our Lord's only reply is to appeal to His Father's testimony, and, face to face with the blindness of the Jews who neither know the Father nor receive His testimony, He feels all the strength and exhilaration of the complete knowledge possessed by Himself : 'And if I shall say that I know Him not, I shall be like to you, a liar. But I do know Him and do keep His word' (John viii, 55).

Our Lord had closed a former discussion with the words : 'Think not that it is I that accuse you before the Father ; he who accuses you is Moses, in whom you put your hope. If you believe Moses you would believe Me also, for he wrote of Me' (v, 45, 46). Here is the same line of thought, more boldly expressed : throughout the present discussion it is not Moses but Abraham whom the adversaries of Jesus invoke, and, in so doing, misunderstand and insult Him. 'Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day : he saw it and was glad.' At His transfiguration, our Lord had wished to make His Apostles see that Moses and Elias, the very fathers of Judaism, had seen and rejoiced in His glory ; and now He makes the same assertion about Abraham, who appears before the Jews only to confound them by his testimony, since Jesus shows them that He had seen His day, and rejoiced ; and that Almighty God is in no sense the God of the dead, but of the living, since to Him all are

alive. Such a statement only filled the Jews with indignation, for they understood but half of it. 'Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast Thou seen Abraham?'<sup>1</sup>

In view of this last sign of blindness, Christ only repeats His statement in more explicit terms: 'Before Abraham was, I am.' 'Weigh the words well,' says S. Augustine (1713), 'and understand the mystery. Notice that "was" refers to man's creation by which he came into being; that "I am" denotes the Divine substance'; and that Christ did not say: 'I was' but: 'I am,' thus expressing the eternity of His being.<sup>2</sup> The Jews shouted blasphemies, and picked up stones, and our Lord turned away. 'No doubt,' adds Augustine, 'He could have engulfed them all in hell, an easy matter for Almighty God; but He wished to give an example of patience rather than make a demonstration of power.'

#### V. *The Man Born Blind.*

In the preceding discussion of our Lord with the Jews, we can still trace the effect of the miracle at the pool of Bethsaida. Now, a new miracle is about to be worked, and one destined to stir up still livelier sentiments among both our Lord's enemies and friends.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Harnack has tried to prove by this text that John represents Jesus as much older than the Synoptics do; this implying that he had not really known Him, whose disciple he claimed to be. In confirmation of this inference from the Gospel, he quotes two texts of S. Irenæus, implying that our Lord passed through all the ages normal to man (*Hæc.*, II, xxii, 5, 6).

This whole exegetical structure is a fragile one. It seems clear that Irenæus was mistaken as to the age at which our Lord died; but S. John cannot be held responsible for this, and it is in no way implied in the present passage. 'Fifty is to be taken as a round number; it was the age that marked the close of the active period of life. The real sense of the words in question is: "You are not an old man yet," an expression from which nothing can be inferred as to the real age of Jesus, since in a case of this sort ten or twenty years, more or less, make no change in the situation at all' (Godet).

<sup>2</sup> Cp. Ps. ci, 26-28, applied in the Epistle to the Hebrews (i, 10-12) to the Son of God: 'Thou in the beginning, O Lord, didst found the earth: and the works of Thy hands are the heavens. They shall perish: but Thou shalt continue. And they shall all grow old as a garment. And as a vesture shalt Thou change them: and they shall be changed. But Thou art the selfsame: and Thy years shall not fail.'

<sup>3</sup> Westcott (in his notes on ix, 1 and x, 22) separates this from the preceding part of the narrative and attaches it to the following (x, 22 ff.); similarly Bernard, p. 323. According to this hypothesis, the cure of the man born blind would not have taken place at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles, but in winter, round and about the Feast of the Dedication. This opinion rests on an interpretation of x, 22 which does not seem to be very probable; on the contrary, ix, 1 seems to go very well with the passage that precedes it.

Afflicted persons often asked alms at the Temple gate (Acts iii, 2); and it would seem that it was here that Jesus encountered the man born blind. The sight of him immediately brought to the disciples' lips questions that betrayed a Jewish prejudice which they had not yet been able to shake off: 'Who,' they ask, 'has sinned, this man or his parents?'<sup>1</sup>

Our Blessed Lord gave His disciples a wider view. Sickness is not a punishment blindly inflicted by God, but before all else it is an occasion of greater good and of a manifestation of the Divine glory. Once again Jesus recalled His quite recent teaching; He did the works of His Father (viii, 28, 29); He was the Light of the world (viii, 12); and of this solemn claim, the impending miracle was the seal.

Spitting on the ground, He made clay of the spittle and spreads it on the eyes of the blind man. We have already met a parallel incident in S. Mark (viii, 23) when, as a means of curing a similar case at Bethsaida, our Lord touched the eyes with saliva and then laid His hands upon the afflicted man. As we remarked then, this use of saliva was looked upon by the Jews as a remedy and, as such, forbidden on the Sabbath day. Of course, no man could have hoped thus to cure those blind from birth, but with our Lord it was a means of arousing the faith and hope of the sick man, and at the same time showing forth the life-giving power of His sacred humanity.

<sup>1</sup> Use has been made of this passage to suggest the view that the doctrine of metempsychosis was prevalent among our Lord's contemporaries. Thus we read in Josephus (B.J., II, 8, 14, 163): 'The Pharisees think that every soul is imperishable, the good ones alone passing into another body, while the bad undergo eternal chastisement.' On this Reinach remarks: 'A very inaccurate way of expressing the doctrine of the Resurrection of the flesh.' Elsewhere Josephus expresses this doctrine a little better (A.J., XVIII, 1, 3, 14): 'They believe that souls have an immortal vigour and that those who during life have practised virtue or vice receive rewards or punishments beneath the earth, the wicked being subjected to a perpetual imprisonment, and the good being able to rest in a new life.'

We can only see in these passages examples of the distortion that Jewish doctrine usually underwent at the hands of Josephus, in his efforts to assimilate it to Grecian ideas. In reality, there is not a single trace of metempsychosis to be found on the Gospel page. The disciples are assuming either a fault already contracted before birth, or a sin of the parents themselves.

In any case, the affliction appears to them to be the result of some fault, and that this view was shared by the Pharisees is shown by their taunt: 'Thou wast wholly born in sin,' i.e. under the assumed influence of his parents' sins. (*Vide* Edersheim, 178.)

He sends the man born blind to the pool of Siloe,<sup>1</sup> a sacred spring in the eyes of the Jews, and as such set in opposition to the Euphrates by the prophet Isaias (viii, 6-7) : 'Forasmuch as this people hath cast away the waters of Siloe, that go with silence, and hath rather taken Rasin and the son of Romelia : therefore, behold the Lord will bring upon them the waters of the river, strong and many. . . . And he shall come up over all his channels, and shall overflow all his banks' ; every day during the Feast of Tabernacles, except the Sabbath and the first day of the Feast itself, the priest would go there to draw water, which was then carried in procession to the Temple for the solemn libations. It was from this that our Lord took the figure of the living waters welling up from the believer's breast. Besides—as S. John observes here—the name Siloe, meaning 'one sent,' was in itself symbolic of Him who, in all His utterances, constantly represented Himself as He who was sent by the Father.<sup>2</sup>

The man therefore went to the pool of Siloe, bathed there and was cured, and immediately found himself the centre of a violent hubbub. Amid the opposing cries of 'This is the beggar, cured' and 'No, it is someone like him,' is heard his own simple statement : 'I am he.'

In reply to the question as to how he had been cured, he replied : 'That man that is called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me : Go to the pool of Siloe and wash. And I went : I washed and I see. And they said to Him : Where is He ? He saith : I know not.'

In this admirably natural and dramatic narrative, we can follow step by step the movements of Christ and of the blind man. This man was not a believer : he knew that he had been cured by someone called Jesus, and that was all. It is a somewhat similar case to that of the paralytic at Bethsaida,<sup>3</sup> who did not even know who had cured him (v, 13) ; both miracles are irreconcilable with the theory of 'the faith that cures.' And in both cases Jesus disappears ; but the subject of the miracle speaks freely, the crowd are aroused, and the Pharisees carry on an inquiry into the

<sup>1</sup> On the excavations at Siloe, see Vincent-Abel, *Jérusalem*, II, pp. 860-864.

<sup>2</sup> In the Middle Ages, Mudjir ed-Din repeats this saying of an ancient writer : 'Whoever goes to Jerusalem ought to go to Mihrâb Dâoud to say his prayers and bathe in the water of Siloe, for they come from Paradise' (quoted by Vincent, *Jérusalem*, II, p. 864).

<sup>3</sup> And of the lame man at the Gate Beautiful (Acts iii, 2 ff.).

matter. In the present case this is described with a precision that permits us to follow all the details.

In once more choosing a Sabbath day for this amazing cure, our Lord had a well-defined intention in view ; He was making a frontal attack on the rabbinic casuistry here in Jerusalem, and in the Temple itself ; but He was going to work a miracle to lend authority to the step He was about to take. This miracle was condemned in advance, so far as the most obstinate of His adversaries were concerned ; it was judged in the light of the doctrine that He taught. The others said to themselves : ' If this man was a sabbath-breaker, how could he perform such miracles ? ' Consequently there was a division in the very heart of the Sanhedrin, or, we may prefer to say, in each conscience there broke out a conflict between a tradition revered as equal to the law and the evidence of a work wrought by the manifest power of God.

At first there was no disposition to believe the miracle itself ; it was asked whether the man was really blind from birth or whether he had been cured at all. He was summoned to appear and, his testimony not being regarded as sufficient, his parents were called too. In their replies we can already trace the effect of the predetermined line that the Jewish leaders were taking, namely that whoever acknowledged Jesus as the Messiah was to be cast out of the synagogue. Such an excommunication was a very terrible punishment indeed ;<sup>1</sup> and especially for those who were poor and consequently dependent upon others, like the parents of the blind man. Unable to face it they shirked the issue ; their son was old enough to speak for himself ; let them ask him. So he was brought before them once again.

The Pharisees call on him to swear in the name of God (cp. Josue vii, 19 ; 1 Esdras ix, 8), while at the same time they try to intimidate him by imposing upon him their own

<sup>1</sup> In its mildest form it was merely a reprimand (*Nezipha*) which isolated the offender for a week or, at the most, a month. In its second degree (*Niddui*) it lasted a month : the culprit had to sit on the ground, wear mourning, let his beard and hair grow untended, be deprived of ritual baths and anointings, and keep himself apart from the community during the common prayers. The third degree of the ban proper (*Herem*) was the most terrible of all : it lasted indefinitely and might involve the confiscation of goods, while all intercourse with the delinquent, even of a private nature, became unlawful. (Cp. Billerbeck, *Der Synagogenbann*, IV, pp. 292-333.

authority as doctors of the law. 'Here,' says Loisy, 'we have judges who demand to be told the truth under oath, while all the time they pretend to know it and dictate to the witness the evidence that they wish to hear.' They reckoned that to a mere beggar such high-handed methods would prove irresistible; but their bad faith was too evident and the man holds his own after all. 'If he be a sinner I know not; one thing I know that whereas I was blind, I now see.' There follow further interrogations about his cure, the authorities hoping to make him contradict himself or at least extract such a statement from him as would allow them to interpret the whole incident as a fraud, or case of healing by merely natural powers. Provoked to retaliation by all these manœuvres the man answers with spirit: 'I have told you already. . . . Why would you hear it again? Will you also become His disciples?' And they, cut to the quick by this sally, reply with bitter pride: 'Be thou His disciple but we are the disciples of Moses.' And once more taking their stand on their learning and authority as doctors of the Law, they continue: 'We know that God spoke to Moses: but as to this man we know not from whence He is.' They did not dare repeat their statement that He was a sinner, but contented themselves with simply rejecting His claims. It is the same hypocritical evasion upon which they will fall back a little later when questioning Jesus Himself, and when in reply to His question as to whether the baptism of John was from Heaven or earth, they will reply: 'We know not' (Matt. xxi, 27).

Once again the man perceives the bad faith of the reply and presses the point home. 'Why, herein is a wonderful thing, that you know not from whence He is, and He hath opened my eyes.' And appealing to a classical principle among the Jews he adds: 'Now we know that God doth not hear sinners: but if a man be a server of God and doth His will, him He hears.' The Pharisees, driven to extremes, remind him with bitter contempt that he was born in sin and forthwith cast him out; when our Lord meets him and brings about his conversion to Himself.

'Jesus heard that they had cast him out. And when He had found him, He said to him: Dost thou believe in the Son of God? He answered, and said: Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him? And Jesus said to him: Thou



hast both seen Him ; and it is He that talketh with thee. And he said : I believe, Lord. And falling down, he adored Him. And Jesus said : For judgement I am come into this world ; that they who see not may see ; and they who see may become blind. And some of the Pharisees, who were with him, heard : and they said unto Him : Are we also blind ? Jesus said to them : If you were blind, you should not have sin : but now you say : We see. Your sin remaineth.' (John ix, 35-41.)

Driven away by the Jews, he is made welcome by the Messias : ' He that shall lose his life for My sake shall find it.'

As we can see by his former replies this poor man looked upon Jesus as a faithful servant of God and as a prophet indeed. Our Lord revealed Himself to him as the Son of Man, and at the same time enlightened him interiorly so that he fell adoring at His feet. And so the judgement took place ; for our Lord had said further back in the narrative that He had not come to judge anyone and that men really judge themselves : ' And this is the judgement : because the light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than the light ' (iii, 19). And to this reversal of rôles whereby the seeing become the blind and the blind are made to see, our Lord bore witness when He blessed God and said : ' Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them to little ones.'

Some of the Pharisees still lingered with our Lord during this last phase of the affair. Possibly, as S. Chrysostom thinks, they were wavering disciples ; perhaps they were enemies seeking every opportunity to spy upon Him. ' Are we also blind ?' they say, strangely enough when they have but just confessed : ' We know not from whence He is.' The truth is they were *not* blind, and it was this that condemned them. ' If you were blind,' said our Lord, ' you should not have sin : but now you say : We see. Your sin remaineth.' A terrible responsibility indeed for these men whom the people revered for their learning, who never wearied of asserting their wisdom, and who only used their influence and knowledge to hide the light from those who could not find it for themselves. ' You have taken away the key of knowledge. You yourselves have not entered in : and those that were entering in you have hindered ' (Luke xi, 52).

VI. *The Good Shepherd.* (x, 1-21.)

In the discourses of our Lord upon which we have been commenting up to the present, we have seen Him take up one Old Testament symbol after another in order to apply it to Himself; the water from the rock, the manna, the luminous cloud. And now, in the same way, He seized upon an allegory frequently upon the lips of the prophets of Israel :

‘Son of man, prophesy concerning the shepherds of Israel : prophesy and say to the shepherds : Thus saith the Lord God : Woe to the shepherds of Israel that fed themselves ! Should not the flocks be fed by the shepherds ? You ate the milk and you clothed yourselves with the wool and you killed that which was fat : but My flock you did not feed. . . . Therefore, ye shepherds, hear the word of the Lord : Thus saith the Lord God : Behold I Myself come upon the shepherds. I will require My flock at their hand, and I will cause them to cease from feeding the flock any more : neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more. And I will deliver My flock from their mouth and it shall no more be meat for them. For thus saith the Lord God : Behold I Myself will seek My sheep and will visit them. . . . And I will bring them out from the peoples and will gather them out of the countries and will bring them to their own land. . . . I will feed My sheep and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord God. I will seek that which was lost : and that which was driven away, I will bring again. And I will bind up that which was broken and I will strengthen that which was weak . . . and I will feed them in judgement.’ (Ezech. xxxiv, 2-16.)

Here we have an admirable picture, no doubt, but one which like all prophecies was destined to be surpassed by the reality. ‘I lay down My life for My sheep,’ this is what the Good Shepherd will say and do, and it is something of which not the slightest suspicion was in Ezechiel’s mind. At the same time this description of Jehovah as Himself the Shepherd of Israel was bound to throw light on the person of Jesus Himself; for here God is heralded as Himself coming to deliver His flock from the evil shepherds and to

restore justice ; and lo ! He that appears is Christ, who once more in His own Person brings about the realization of what, long since, the prophets had foretold.

Even apart from these venerable passages of Holy Scripture every detail of the allegory employed by our Lord was clear enough to those to whom He spoke. The flocks were shut up for the night in enclosures surrounded by walls of loose stone, breast high. Several flocks were gathered together for the night in one enclosure, and entrusted to one watchman ; the shepherds came in the morning to call their own sheep and lead them away.

And this was the *rôle* fulfilled by Christ Himself. In due time He comes, making no attempt, as a robber would, to scale the surrounding wall, but knocking at the door and letting the porter open it in response. He calls His sheep who, although they have mingled with the others, know His voice and run to meet Him. One may recall, for example, that one word uttered by Him to Mary Magdalen after the resurrection : ‘ Mary ’. It was the Good Shepherd who called her by her name ; and straightway she answered : ‘ Rabboni ! ’ Then He goes forth at the head of the flock, all His sheep following Him, which is all they need to do to find the good pasturage that they seek. Others call them, too—hirelings—but their voices are unknown to the sheep and at the very sound of them they flee. ‘ To whom shall we go ? Thou hast the words of eternal life.’

‘ I am the door of the sheep.’ In these words our Lord is making use of another aspect of the life of a shepherd and his sheep. For after the early morning exodus from the fold, the door remains open so that the sheep can go in and out at will. If anything frightens them they seek safety within the enclosure ; if they are hungry they go forth to the pastures outside. It is by the door of the fold that they find safety and nourishment, and all they need.

Then the thought flies back to the contrast between the hireling and the Good Shepherd, and here we trace anew the features that Ezechiel had already noted in his times. The bad shepherds who preceded Christ had no care but to enrich themselves at the expense of the flock which they robbed and slew at will. But Christ came to give life and to give it more abundantly.

Those who are not betrayers of their trust are at least hirelings ; the sheep are not really theirs and they care nothing

about them at all. In the wide solitudes of Judea the care of the flocks was not without its risks. David told Saul how, in defending his flock, he had slain both a lion and a bear, and although as early as the time of Christ these animals had disappeared, there remained the jackal, the hyena and the wolf. The presence of these enemies, only too familiar as they were, revealed the difference between the hireling and the true shepherd, the one forsaking the flock, and the other defending it with his own life.

Later on, S. Peter will write to the ancients :

‘Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking care of it, not by constraint but willingly, according to God : not for filthy lucre’s sake but voluntarily : neither as lording it over the clergy but being made a pattern of the flock from the heart. And when the prince of pastors shall appear, you shall receive a never-fading crown of glory.’ (1 Peter v, 2-4.)

Similarly we find S. Paul thus addressing the ancients of Ephesus :

‘Take heed to yourselves and to the whole flock, wherein the Holy Ghost hath placed you bishops, to rule the Church of God which He hath purchased with His own blood. I know that after my departure ravening wolves will enter in among you, not sparing the flock. And of your own selves shall arise men speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.’ (Acts xx, 28-30.)

Contrasting Himself with the hirelings Jesus says : ‘I am the Good Shepherd, and I know Mine and Mine know Me ; the Father knoweth Me and I know the Father.’ ‘No one knoweth the Son but the Father : neither doth anyone know the Father but the Son. . . .’ This close and exclusive relation is not based only on mutual knowledge but on the community of life which that implies, and the same may be said, all due proportion being preserved, of the mutual knowledge of the Shepherd and His sheep. ‘When He speaks of knowledge,’ S. Cyril remarks (1044-1048), ‘Christ does not mean only an operation of the understanding, but rather a community of life, whether this be a quality of nature or a free gift of Grace.’ S. John writes in the same sense : ‘Everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God’ (1 John iv, 7).

Once more it is this same community of life to which our Lord refers in the discourse after the Last Supper : ' As the Father hath loved Me, I also have loved you. Abide in My love ' (xv, 9). Running through both passages is the parallel which our Lord was so fond of drawing between the relations of the Father with the Son and that of Christ with Christians.

' I lay down My life for My sheep.' ' These words,' Godet remarks, ' formed a sort of refrain (cp. 11, 17, 18), like a number of other sayings recorded by S. John as having been spoken at times when our Lord was deeply moved ' (iii, 15, 16 ; iv, 23, 24 ; vi, 39, 40, 44, 54). The sacrifice referred to by the words in question is only very faintly represented by the allegory of the shepherd, for here as everywhere the symbol is infinitely surpassed by the divine reality for which it stands. The shepherd, indeed, may expose himself to danger in defending his sheep and may rescue them at the risk of his own life ; but the sacrifice can never be a source of life and more abundant life to the sheep, just as his relations with them and the familiar sound of his voice will never represent the ineffable union between Christians and Christ.

And our Lord's vision embraces not only Jerusalem and Jewry as a whole, but the entire world of men. ' And other sheep I have that are not of this fold : them also I must bring. And they shall hear My voice. . . . ' The reference here is not to other flocks, but to sheep scattered, and without a Shepherd at all. It is of these that John is thinking when he writes a little further on : ' Jesus should die . . . not only for the nation, but to gather together in one the children of God that were dispersed ' (John xi, 51, 52). This call to the sheep in order to gather them into one fold is God's will, and will come to pass, a fact emphasized by our Lord's use here of His favourite word for expressing a Divine decree. Thus, ' The Son of Man *must* be lifted up ' (iii, 14) ; ' He *must* increase ' (iii, 30) ; ' I *must* work the works of Him that sent Me ' (ix, 4) ; ' The Son of Man *must* be lifted up ' (xii, 34) ; ' He *must* rise again from the dead ' (xx, 9). Moreover, He speaks with the assurance that admits of no hesitation or doubt. The sheep are His already and they will hear His voice. We find here the same note of confidence as in the closing words of the Acts : ' Be it known,' said S. Paul to the Jews of Rome, ' therefore to you

that this salvation of God is sent to the Gentiles : and they will hear it ' (Acts xxviii, 28).

For all these sheep of His, Jesus is going to die freely and of His own will ; and He takes pains to emphasize the spontaneousness of His death from which its true character is derived. This expression *τιθέναι τὴν ψυχὴν* is the same that S. Peter uses when he protests his readiness to sacrifice himself for our Lord (xiii, 37) and Jesus Himself takes it from his lips with a sad irony (xiii, 38) ; while a little later He will remind His disciples that there is no greater love than that shown by a man who lays down his life for his friends (xv, 13). Finally, this voluntary sacrifice is the special object of the Father's satisfaction in His Son : ' Therefore doth the Father love Me.'

Moreover, the object of this satisfaction is not only Christ's devotion to men in giving His life for them, but also His obedience to His Father's command. Godet, however, seems to be afraid that to stress this notion of a command will have the effect of compromising the independence of the Son ; consequently he writes : ' The real tenor of this " command " with which our Lord was sent into the world is this : " You may die or not, rise again or not, according to the free promptings of your heart," and Christ Himself only refers to it as a " command " in order to cover His incomparable prerogative with a veil of humility' (181). This is to do violence to our Lord's own words with the idea of safeguarding His dignity as the Son of God ; surely His most prominent characteristic, particularly as we see Him in S. John, is His entire dependence upon His Father. ' I have not spoken of Myself ; but the Father who sent Me, He gave Me commandment (*ἐντολὴν δέδωκεν*) what I should say and what I should speak . . . ' (xii, 49). And a little further on : ' If you keep My commandments you shall abide in My love : as I also have kept My Father's commandments and do abide in His love . . . ' (xv, 10). And then He adds almost immediately : ' This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love than this no man hath ; that a man lay down his life for his friends ' (xv, 12-13).

It follows that this also was the commandment which the Father had given the Son, to love His own to the point of giving His life for them ; and it is the fulfilment of this precept that gives occasion to the Apostles to admire

the obedience of Christ (Rom. v, 19 ; Phil. ii, 8 ; Heb. v, 8).

Certainly all this will not lead us to forget that the Son of God is God, like His Father, and that the great plan that provides for man's redemption was determined upon by the united will of the Father and the Son. But even within the bosom of the Holy Trinity the Son receives everything from His Father ; and if we look towards His Sacred Humanity we find within it a human will capable of gaining merit by obedience to the commands of God.

No doubt this particular command was the most terrible ever issued by God, but it was destined to bear an incomparable fruit of salvation for man, of bliss for Christ, and of glory for God the Father Himself.

‘ A dissension rose again among the Jews for these words. And many of them said : He hath a devil and is mad. Why hear you Him ? Others said : These are not the words of one that hath a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind ? ’ (John x, 19-21.)

This brief epilogue which S. John adds to our Lord's discourse shows clearly enough the persistent division that obtained in Jewish opinion at the time. Here, as throughout the Gospel, the same utterances and the same miracles produce contrary effects among those who witness them, some being roused to hostility and anger, and others touched. But also, here as through the whole of Christ's life, it was His enemies who were firm, while His followers were timid and afraid. The one party clinched the matter by condemning Him out of hand : ‘ He has a devil, he is mad, why do you listen to Him ? ’ are the kind of remarks they made. The others, like Nicodemus, raised objections but without daring openly to declare their allegiance to Christ. By and by these sound but wavering wills would have to be gripped and transformed by the grace of the Holy Ghost.

But while the world waits for this miracle of grace, Jesus moves on to His death. Already there is a sense of its nearness, and His own predictions of its approach grow more and more frequent as the days go by. The very choice of allegory is significant ; sheep, representing the disciples. Further back, during the active apostolate in Galilee, Christ compared His followers to strong beasts of burden bending

under the yoke and finding it light and easy to the neck (Matt. xi, 29) ; but now they are sheep about to be sent in the midst of wolves. But still He encourages them with the words : ' Fear not, little flock, for it hath pleased your Father to give you a kingdom ' (Luke xii, 32).



## CHAPTER II

### JESUS IN SAMARIA AND JUDEA

#### *I. The Disciples.*

THE discourse of our Lord that we have just been studying afresh is pre-eminent among all the rest for its intimate and tender tone. The Good Shepherd gathers His little flock around Him, and at the same time calls to Him His 'other sheep,' still scattered far and wide. We shall frequently recognize the same features in S. Luke's narrative and in the discourses recorded by him in the section that we are about to explore.

'And it came to pass, when the days of His assumption were accomplishing that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem.' (Luke ix, 51.)

This solemn introduction at once brings to the front the gravity of the step now taken by our Lord. In going to Jerusalem He was passing straight on to His death, and He knew it, but His time was nearly accomplished and He stepped firmly on, in fulfilment of what had been written of Him of old. For the rest, the expression<sup>1</sup> itself marks the glorious approaching end of His earthly trial.

With Him went a considerable band of followers ; the twelve Apostles and also, no doubt, other disciples of whom we shall be hearing more before long ; and He had sent before Him agents to secure and prepare a lodging for Him and His friends. The route through Samaria was the one usually taken by pilgrims to Jerusalem and, as a rule, they were not interfered with by the Samaritans. But on this occasion the party were refused the hospitality asked for, which would have had to be extended to a large number of persons. Whereupon the two sons of Zebedee, filled with indignation, called down on the offenders fire from Heaven. Jesus had

<sup>1</sup> ἀνάληψις, cp. ὑψωθῆναι (John iii, 14 ; viii, 28 ; xiii, 3).

named them Sons of Thunder, and He recognized their zeal, ill-regulated though it was as yet. Perhaps the quite recent experience of the Transfiguration was still fresh in their minds, and they were tempted to imitate Elias<sup>1</sup> who consumed Achab's messengers with a word. Christ rebuked them and the little band turning out of its way 'went into another town.'<sup>2</sup>

It was during this journey, or perhaps at the end of it,<sup>3</sup> that our Lord sent His seventy<sup>4</sup> disciples on their missionary journey.

'And after these things the Lord appointed also other seventy-two. And He sent them two and two before His face into every city and place whither He Himself was to come. And He said to them : The harvest indeed is great but the labourers are few. Pray ye therefore the lord of the harvest that he send labourers into his harvest. Go : behold I send you as lambs among wolves. Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes : and salute no man by the way. Into whatsoever house you enter, first say : Peace be to this house. And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon him : but if not, it shall return to you. And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they have : for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Remove not from house to house. And into what city soever you enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you. And heal the sick that are therein and say to them : The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you. But into whatsoever city you enter and they receive you not, going forth into the streets thereof say : Even the very dust of your city that cleaveth to us we wipe off against you. Yet know this, that the kingdom of God is at hand. I say to you, it shall be more tolerable at that day for Sodom than for that city.' (Luke x, 1-12.)

<sup>1</sup> A variant found in some of the best MSS. (ACDΘW) in several of the most ancient versions, and in some Fathers, expressly adds (v. 54), to the disciples' words : 'Lord, wilt Thou that we command fire to come down from Heaven and consume them,' the words 'as did Elias.' Two other variants, less well-attested, add to verse 55 : 'You do not know of what spirit you are ;' and to verse 56 : 'The Son of man is not come to destroy souls, but to save.'

<sup>2</sup> Luke records here our Lord's answer to the three disciples (cp. Matt. viii, 19-22).

<sup>3</sup> 'It may be conjectured that it was near Jerusalem, perhaps at Bethania, that the seventy-two received their mission' (Lagrange).

<sup>4</sup> The MSS. and the Fathers give two readings : seventy and seventy-two. We adopt the first, which seems the better attested of the two.

In S. Matthew's Gospel (chap. x) we have already met with a similar mission accompanied by almost identical instructions ; only then, it was the twelve who were addressed by our Lord, while it is the seventy here. Doubt has been thrown on the historical character of this second mission, which has been regarded as nothing more than an adaptation of that of the Apostles themselves. In reality the mission of the Apostles, also recorded by S. Luke himself (ix, 1-5), took place under other circumstances, towards the end of the ministry in Galilee, Jesus sending on the twelve into the north of that province, after having first preached the Gospel there Himself. Here, on the other hand, He makes the disciples precede Him before He undertakes the evangelization of the south. Everywhere the instructions given are similar, except for differences of detail : for example, the twelve receive power to raise from the dead, of which there is no mention here ; the twelve are recommended to confine their efforts to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and not to approach the territory of the Gentiles or the Samaritans (Matt. x, 5-6) ; a distinction again without any counterpart in the present narrative.

The names of the seventy have not come down to us, but many facts show that, grouped around the twelve, there was a number of faithful attached to our Lord, and when it becomes a question of finding a successor to Judas, Peter makes it a condition that the new Apostle should have followed the Saviour from the baptism of John until our Lord's own Ascension into Heaven. The instances (e.g. Luke ix, 57-62) of men called by Jesus to follow Him and either obeying or disappearing altogether from the scene, show that Christ had among His adherents others besides the twelve ; all the same, this group of disciples did not form a permanent body like the twelve Apostles themselves, and we can easily imagine that it was very soon dispersed.<sup>1</sup> The number *seventy* was consecrated by Jewish use. Thus Jehovah

<sup>1</sup> On this subject Eusebius (H.E., I, 12) writes : ' Everyone knows perfectly well the names of the Apostles as recorded in the Gospels ; but a list of the seventy disciples nowhere exists. It is said, however, that Barnabas was among them, since he is mentioned several times in the Acts and also in S. Paul's epistle to the Galatians. The same is claimed for Sosthenes, who was associated with S. Paul in writing to the Corinthians ; and Clement, in the fifth of the Hypotyposes, maintains this, and also that the Cephas of whom S. Paul wrote : " When Cephas was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face," is one of the seventy disciples, who bore the same name as the Apostle Peter. He records further that Matthias,

commanded Moses to appoint seventy elders who should receive the spirit of prophecy and assist in the government of the people (Num. xi) ; the Sanhedrin, later on, being formed on this model with seventy members and a president. Again when Josephus wished to organize Galilee he chose seventy elders and entrusted the government to them (*B. J.*, I, 20, 5 ; *Life*, 14). And the zealots of Jerusalem, having suppressed the existing courts of justice, replaced them by a council of seventy chiefs (*B. J.*, IV, 5, 4).<sup>1</sup>

The nations of the earth were reckoned as seventy by the Jews (Gen. x) ; and to correspond to this number seventy bulls were offered in the Temple at the Feast of Tabernacles. This feast had only recently taken place when our Lord sent out the seventy, so perhaps there is some connection between the two events, and perhaps it is germane to the subject to recall what He had said about the sheep who were not of this fold, but whom He would call and who would hear His voice. Some confirmation of these conjectures may be found in the omission, already noted, of the prohibition formerly issued to the Apostles, by which they were forbidden to go among the Gentiles, and by the highly mixed character of the population of Perea, whither the seventy seem to have been sent.

What is at once more certain and more important is the development that the mission of the seventy implies in the movement initiated by Christ. No longer is He to confine His preaching of the kingdom to the land of Israel or to be

who was chosen by the Apostles in Judas' place, and that other disciple who was honoured by being associated with him in this election by lot, had both been judged worthy of the vocation of the seventy. The name of Thaddæus is also brought forward in this connection ; and about him I am going shortly to relate a story that has come down to us. For the rest, if we think about it, we shall find that there were more than these seventy disciples of the Lord, as S. Paul testifies when he says that after His resurrection from the Dead the Saviour had been seen first by Cephas, then by the twelve, and on a single occasion by five hundred brethren, of whom several, he tells us, are dead, but the greater number were still in the world at the time at which he wrote. He goes on to say that the Saviour appeared to James, one of those who were called brothers of the Lord. And then, since there were many besides who were apostles after the model of the twelve, he adds the words, " then He was seen by all the apostles." But enough on this subject.

This passage shows that at the time of Eusebius, and even of Clement of Alexandria, there existed no fuller *data* on the subject of the seventy than we possess to-day. By mere conjecture there were included among them persons mentioned in the Acts, or Apostles, like Cephas and Thaddæus, who are known by two names.

<sup>1</sup> We may recall also the legend of the Septuagint.

assisted only by the twelve ; on the contrary, His disciples are dispersed far and wide, preaching and working miraculous cures. Through the hospitality shown them they are able to penetrate everywhere and to bring the whole population into direct contact with the Gospel message.

In the early records of the Christian religion we shall find missionary undertakings of an analogous kind, and our Lord's followers going out to preach the Gospel two by two : so Barnabas and Paul (Acts xiii, 2) ; Judas and Silas (xv, 27) ; Barnabas and Mark (xv, 39) ; Paul and Silas (xv, 40) ; Timothy and Silas (xvii, 14) ; Timothy and Erastus (xix, 22). Later still, the work of the Apostles was carried on by evangelists of whom an admirable portrait has been drawn by Eusebius.<sup>1</sup>

And the seventy returned with joy, saying : ' Lord, the devils also are subject to us in Thy name ' (x, 17). This return of the seventy forms one of the most vivid pictures of rejoicing in the Gospel story, and also one of the last. These disciples, only recently won over to the Faith, still imperfectly trained, babes and lowly, lambs sent among wolves, return like victors from the fight. They have even driven devils out of men. And Christ, in reply to their eager

<sup>1</sup> H.E., III, 37 : ' Quadratus was among those who flourished at this time, of whom it is said that, like Philip's daughters, he was honoured with prophetic gifts. And there are many other celebrated examples among those having the first rank in the succession of the Apostles. Wonderfully apt pupils of such masters, they built on the foundations of the Churches that these had founded in every land ; developing and extending the preaching of the Gospel and spreading far and wide through all the earth the saving seeds of the kingdom of Heaven. For many disciples of that time felt their souls enriched by the Divine Word with an overpowering love for heavenly wisdom. They began by fulfilling the Saviour's counsel and distributing their goods to the poor. Then they left their country and set forth to fulfil the mission of evangelists in the world. They vied with each other in preaching and transmitting the book of the Holy Gospels to those who as yet had heard nothing of the teaching of the Faith. They were content to lay the foundations of the Faith among foreign nations, instituting pastors among them and handing over to these the care of those whom they had but lately won over to belief. Finally they departed to other countries and other nations, with the grace and help of God, for all the while the countless and potent influences of the Divine Spirit were working within their souls. And so, from the first announcing of the heavenly tidings crowds gathered and eagerly received within their souls the religion of the Creator of the World. We cannot possibly give the number or names of those who form the immediate successors of the Apostles or became pastors and evangelists of the various churches in the world. Here we can do no more than barely mention and record the names of those whose memory hands down to us the tradition of apostolic teaching.'

account, tells them that He too has seen Satan 'like lightning falling from Heaven.'

In answering the Pharisees of Galilee He had said (Matt. xii, 28) : ' If I, by the Spirit of God cast out devils, then is the kingdom of God come upon you ' ; but now this is no longer His work alone, since it is performed by all the disciples in His name ; and the strong man armed is driven from his house. Soon Jesus would exclaim : ' Now is the judgement of the world ; now shall the prince of this world be cast out ' (John xii, 31). But He did not wish the foundations of His disciples' rejoicing to be of the wrong kind. Not long ago He told those who called His Mother blessed : ' Yea, rather blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it ' (Luke xi, 28). And here in the same way, if the disciples must rejoice, it should be less because they can drive out devils than that their names are written in the kingdom of heaven.<sup>1</sup> This was the occasion on which, according to S. Luke, our Lord exclaimed with joy as He contemplated this disposition of Providence (Luke x, 21-24) :

' In that same hour, He rejoiced in the Holy Ghost and said : I confess to Thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and earth, because Thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them to little ones. Yea, Father, for so it hath seemed good in Thy sight. All things are delivered to Me by My Father. And no one knoweth who the Son is, but the Father : and who the Father is but the Son and to whom the Son will reveal Him. And turning to His disciples, He said : Blessed are the eyes that see the things which you see. For I say to you that many prophets and kings have desired to see the things that you see and have not seen them ; and to hear the things that you hear and have not heard them.'

We have already met these two passages in S. Matthew's Gospel, one coming after the account of the deputation from S. John the Baptist (xi, 25) and the other after the parables (xiii, 16), different contexts in which our Lord's words are equally in place. And here, however, on the occasion of

<sup>1</sup> See Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps. cxxx.* : ' Non omnes Christiani boni dæmonia eiciunt ; omnium tamen nomina scripta sunt in cælo. Non eos voluit gaudere ex eo quod proprium habebant, sed ex eo quod cum ceteris salutem tenebant ' (P.L., XXXVII, 1709, 1710). So S. Paul, after having enumerated the better gift, adds : ' And I show unto you a yet more excellent way : the way of charity ' (1 Cor. xii, 31).

the joyous return of the disciples, their bearing is still more easily seen. It may be asked, 'Are these preachers and wonder-workers?' And the reply is, 'Truly nothing but children, simple souls, without learning, themselves full of wonder at finding such power in their hands; yet compared with them, the learned and the wise are blind.' It is only the law of Divine Providence which our Lord had recently proclaimed after the cure of the man born blind: '. . . I am come into this world; that they who see not may see; and they who see may become blind' (John ix, 39). It is this same law that we shall find so often extolled by S. Paul:

'For it is written: I will destroy the wisdom of the wise: and the prudence of the prudent I will reject. Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For, seeing that in the wisdom of God, the world, by wisdom, knew not God, it pleased God, by the foolishness of our preaching, to save them that believe. . . . For see your vocation, brethren, that there are not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble. But the foolish things of the world hath God chosen, that He may confound the wise; and the weak things of the world hath God chosen that He may confound the strong; and the base things of the world . . . hath God chosen . . . that He might bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in His sight.' (1 Cor. i, 19-29. Cp. 2 Cor. iv, 3, 4; Rom. i, 22.)

Everywhere it is the same thought, but with the difference of emphasis that distinguishes the Apostle from the Lord. With S. Paul it is the pæan of a soul triumphant at the sight of the exaltation of God and the humiliation of His enemies; with Jesus it is the placid contemplation of that all-powerful majesty which exalts the lowly and humbles the proud.

And, in giving Himself over to this transport of religious emotion, Christ revealed the profoundest characteristic of His life; namely, the mutual and absolute comprehension of the Father and the Son. Into this mystery, inaccessible to every intelligence besides, They can introduce by Grace whom They will, but it is Theirs alone by natural right. The Father and the Son are equally above all created intelligence, and equally comprehend each other. All the Johannine theology is to be found in these few words of our Lord.

II. *The Conditions of Service.*

The passages upon which we have just been commenting enable us to catch a glimpse of the little band of disciples surrounding Jesus and the twelve. It is especially S. Luke who makes them known to us, and certain incidents recorded by him, in this part of his Gospel, inform us as to the conditions imposed by Christ upon His followers and His promises to them.

‘And it came to pass as they walked in the way, that a certain man said to Him : I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest. Jesus said to him : The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air nests ; but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head. But He said to another : Follow Me. And he said : Lord, suffer me first to go and to bury my father. And Jesus said to him : Let the dead bury their dead, but go thou and preach the kingdom of God. And another said : I will follow Thee, Lord ; but let me first take my leave of them that are at my house. Jesus said to him : No man putting his hand to the plough and looking back is fit for the kingdom of God.’ (Luke ix, 57-62 ; cp. Matt. viii, 19-22.)

Of these incidents, the two first are also recorded by S. Matthew, who places their occurrence in Galilee before the crossing of the lake which preceded the deliverance of the demoniac of Gergesa (*supra*, vol. I, p. 267). The date matters little, the true value of the narrative lying in the lesson which it yields, as to what our Lord offered to His disciples and what He demanded of them. Nor are the heroes of these episodes better known to us than their date. The first, according to S. Matthew, was a scribe and is judged severely by S. Jerome (pp. 52-53) who considers that he wished, like Simon Magus later, to follow our Lord from motives of avarice and ambition alone. S. Chrysostom also regards him as an insolent and grasping intruder, dismissed by Jesus as He dismissed the flatterer who approached Him with the words ‘Good Master’ upon his lips (pp. 346-347). We may ask if there is any justification for such severe views as these. Possibly there is, but we know nothing about it really, the only care of the evangelists being to make clear the attitude of our Lord. He was not eager to accept an offer of service which, however sincere, did not seem to be the result of careful thought ; He wishes people to know the cost of being His disciple ; as He would be saying very soon,



before beginning to build a tower, it is necessary to make sure that one has wherewithal to finish it, in view of the exacting nature of the work. To the two disciples of S. John the Baptist, who were the first to seek Him and ask where He lived, He answered : ' Come and see ; ' but to this scribe, doubtless accustomed to an easy life, while giving the same reply He expressly emphasizes the life of deprivation that He has chosen, and with which His disciples must fall in. In the second case, the man is already a disciple, but asks for a respite while he goes to bury his father ; but Christ insists on being followed without delay.<sup>1</sup>

Possibly it was because of His own imminent departure that our Lord took this line. Clement of Alexandria (*Strom.*, III, 4, 25) has identified this disciple with Philip the Deacon. If this be the case he was one of the seventy disciples ; his departure to follow our Lord, in such circumstances, must indeed have cost him dear, but he gained a glorious vocation and a whole series of graces for his family and himself ; his four daughters were prophetesses, while he was the Apostle of Samaria and Saron. Whatever may be the fact about this identification, the great lesson that our Lord and the evangelist wish to pass on is that the kingdom of God must be preferred to any family interests whatsoever : ' He that loveth father and mother more than Me is not worthy of Me ' (Matt. x, 37).

The third disciple was more hesitating and seems to have been dismissed by our Lord. The kingdom of God must be sought before everything else, and whoever gives way to regrets by looking behind him cannot be a disciple of Christ. We may recall how, in the time of the Judges, Gedeon recruited his army. It was to be a select body and not a mob. Our Lord's demands are stricter still, inasmuch as the campaign that He has set on foot is of a more sacred kind.

These demands are expressed still more clearly in our Lord's utterances during this journey as they are recorded by S. Luke :

' And there went great multitudes with him. And turning He said to them : If any man come to Me and hate not his father and mother and wife and

<sup>1</sup> We have little information that could throw light on this incident. Plummer (*S. Matthew*, p. 130, n.) remarks : ' It is probable that the father was still alive. At the present day, an Oriental, with his father sitting by his side, has been known to say respecting his future projects : " But I must first bury my father." '

S. Chrysostom supposes that to return home would have been for this man the occasion of a lapse to which he would have yielded, after the funeral. There would have been the division of the inheritance and a whole sequence of affairs to which he would have had to attend (p. 348).

children and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. And whosoever doth not carry his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.' (Luke xiv, 25-27.)

We have already had before us these stern words which were spoken by our Lord to the Apostles after He had foretold His passion to them for the first time (Matt. x, 37, 38). Now that passion draws near and it is not to the twelve only that He wishes to make known the conditions of His service but to all who bear the Christian name. So He insists :

'... which of you, having a mind to build a tower, doth not first sit down and reckon the charges that are necessary, whether he have wherewithal to finish it : lest, after he hath laid the foundation and is not able to finish it, all that see it begin to mock him, saying : This man began to build and was not able to finish. Or what king, about to go to make war against another king, doth not first sit down and think whether he be able, with ten thousand, to meet him that, with twenty thousand, cometh against him ? Or else, while the other is yet afar off, sending an embassy, he desireth conditions of peace. So likewise, every one of you that doth not renounce all that he possesseth, cannot be My disciple.' (Luke xiv, 28-33.)<sup>1</sup>

From the very beginning of His ministry Jesus had many times been aware that a thrill of enthusiasm was passing over the multitude to whom He spoke, and indeed His teaching and especially His miracles could stir up a spirit of zeal that seemed as if it must carry everything before it ; but all this was as fragile as a house built by the side of a rapid river, which might be carried away at the first shower of rain. It was not on such passing sentiments as these that our Lord wished to build His Church, but rather on faith ; and since its structure would be lofty and threatened by many a storm, the foundations must be deeply laid, it being each man's business to make sure whether he can dig to the very rock, renouncing all his possessions as a necessary condition of this feat.

The parable of the marriage feast recorded in this same

<sup>1</sup> Jülicher's attempt to find a parallel to this passage in Epictetus (*Entretiens*, III, xv, 8) is without justification ; cp. our work, *La Vie Chrétienne*, pp. 66 ff.

chapter of S. Luke, makes clear the kind of welcome that greeted our Blessed Lord's advances to men :

‘ A certain man made a great supper and invited many. And he sent his servant at the hour of supper to say to them that were invited, that they should come ; for now all things are ready. And they began all at once to make excuse. The first said to him : I have bought a farm, and I must needs go out and see it. I pray thee, hold me excused. And another said : I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to try them. I pray thee hold me excused. And another said : I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.’ (Luke xiv, 16–20.)

Now all these people had accepted the invitation given, but when the appointed hour had arrived and the summons came, they all found a loophole of escape. If we are to respond to Christ's gracious invitation we must break all the ties that bind us, and only too often we dare not. Our wavering wills harden themselves in the illusion, condemned from the very beginning by Christ Himself, that it is possible to serve two masters at the same time. Soon we shall see another victim of this temptation in the form of the rich young man.

And so, in the course of these last months, our Lord continues the training of His disciples, for, if the Galilean multitudes are wavering and still only half-converted, He would, at least, assure Himself of the fidelity of the little band which surrounded Him. Hence the warnings preserved to us by S. Luke ; and if these utterances sometimes seem more exacting than those in the Sermon on the Mount it is because Jesus is now speaking to a chosen few.

‘ Fear not, little flock, for it hath pleased your Father to give you a kingdom. Sell what you possess and give alms. Make to yourselves bags which grow not old, a treasure in heaven which faileth not : where no thief approacheth nor moth corrupteth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.’ (Luke xii, 32–34.)

Soon the shepherd will be stricken down and the ‘ little flock ’ scattered ; but the terrible panic of the Passion will do no more than pass over it, the Good Shepherd will call His sheep together again and the flock be reassembled for all time ; remaining what our Lord made it, humble and

defenceless like sheep in the midst of wolves (Luke x, 3) : but faithful to its Shepherd and to those shepherds who take His place here below, Peter and his successors, to the end (John xxi, 16, 17).

### III. *The Good Samaritan.*

At the end of this section of S. Luke we see Jesus in Samaria ; where, apparently, He put forward the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke x, 25-37).

‘And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, tempting Him, and saying, Master, what must I do to possess eternal life ? But He said to him : What is written in the law ? How readest thou ? He answering said : Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart and with thy whole soul and with all thy strength and with all thy mind : and thy neighbour as thyself. And He said to him : Thou hast answered right. This do : and thou shalt live. But he, willing to justify himself, said to Jesus : And who is my neighbour ? And Jesus answering said : A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among robbers, who also stripped him and having wounded him went away, leaving him half dead. And it chanced, that a certain priest went down the same way : and seeing him, passed by. In like manner also a Levite, when he was near the place and saw him, passed by. But a certain Samaritan, being on his journey, came near him : and seeing him was moved with compassion : and going up to him bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine : and setting him upon his own beast, brought him to an inn and took care of him. And the next day he took out two pence and gave to the host and said : Take care of him : and whatsoever thou shalt spend over and above, I, at my return, will repay thee. Which of these three, in thy opinion, was neighbour to him that fell among the robbers ? But he said : He that shewed mercy to him. And Jesus said to him : Go and do thou in like manner.’ (Luke x, 25-37.)

The story here told is founded on real events of every-day life. From the Fountain of Eliseus, near Jericho, to that of the Apostles, about two miles from Jerusalem, there is not a drop of water to be found : moreover, this Judean desert is still dangerous to cross to-day outside the pilgrimage

season, when the many visitors help to protect each other.<sup>1</sup>

Every detail of the story would remind those who heard it of the experiences of daily life : so that the main lesson as to who is our neighbour would stand out with startling clearness. This was the heart of the discussion. We remember our Lord's words in the Sermon on the Mount : ' You have heard that it hath been said : Thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thy enemy. But I say to you : Love your enemies . . . pray for them that persecute you ' (Matt. v, 43). Here it is the same lesson in a different form. The Samaritan, put forward by Christ as a very model of charity, was to the Jews more than a stranger ; rather was He an enemy from whom one could not even ask for something to drink (John iv, 9). But our Lord would tell the Jew that the Samaritan is his neighbour, and to make the lesson clear and inescapable He drew this picture of his deed of mercy ; he was at least a ' neighbour ' to the Israelite lying wounded by the way.<sup>2</sup>

#### IV. *Martha and Mary.*

' Now it came to pass, as they went, that He entered into a certain town : and a certain woman named Martha received Him into her house. And she had a

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Fonck, *Parabeln*, pp. 658-659. S. Jerome mentions the signs of brigandage in this spot : *In Jer.*, III, 2 ; *Epist.*, cviii, 12 (P.L., XXIV, 726 ; XXII, 887). He explains the name Adommim thus : ' Latine appellari potest ascensus ruforum sive rubrantium, propter sanguinem, qui illic creber a latronibus funditur . . . ubi et castellum militum situm est ob auxilia viatorum. Huius cruenti et sanguinari loci Dominus quoque in parabola descendentis Ierichum de Ierosolyma recordatur.'

The Bedouins of to-day behave just like the brigands of former times : robbers and pillagers before all else, they strip the traveller of everything he possesses and then leave him, whether wounded or no. And the methods of healing are the same. Michel Julien (*L'Egypte*, Lille, 1895, p. 276) relates the following incident. A Franciscan Father was going from Jerusalem to Jericho, when the Bedouin who was acting as his guide somehow got hurt while in the stirrup, the leg being badly grazed. ' Have you any wine ? ' he asked the Father, and this being forthcoming, mixed it with some olive oil that he carried in a little phial. With this he washed the wound, dressed it and set out, duly mounted, on the road.

<sup>2</sup> ' Since the expression Neighbour involves the idea of correlation, our Lord has a right to reverse the terms, and He has good reason for doing so. For to ask : " By whom would I be helped when in distress ? " is a question more sure of an answer than : " Whom would I help in like case ? " There is no doubt what the answer to the first question would be, for love of self comes to the aid of conscience in producing the reply : " By anybody." ' (Godet, p. 50.)

sister called Mary, who sitting also at the Lord's feet, heard His word. But Martha was busy about much serving. Who stood and said : Lord, hast Thou no care that my sister hath left me alone to serve ? Speak to her, therefore, that she help me. And the Lord answering, said to her : Martha, Martha, thou art careful and art troubled about many things. But one thing is necessary. Mary hath chosen the best part, which shall not be taken away from her.' (x, 38-43.)

No date or place is assigned by S. Luke to this episode, which is one of the most charming that he records in his Gospel. However, he gives the names of the two sisters, Martha and Mary, and we at once recognize the same two with whom S. John has made us acquainted in connection with the raising of Lazarus, nor do we find any difference between the picture drawn by him and that which we have before us here.

'The characteristics of the two sisters are brought out in a very subtle way. In S. Luke the contrast is summed up, as it were, in one definite incident : in S. John it is developed gradually in the course of a continuous narrative. In S. Luke the contrast is direct and trenchant, a contrast (one might almost say) of light and darkness. But in S. John the characters are shaded off, as it were, into one another.'<sup>1</sup>

The identification of the characters enables us to recognize Bethania as the scene where the incident took place. In our Lord's time it appeared to the traveller who had just crossed the Judean desert as forming a setting of refreshing verdure. To-day it is a mean village, but glorified in Christian eyes by this passage from the Gospel page.<sup>2</sup>

Martha<sup>3</sup> was the mistress of the house, and it was naturally she who received the Lord,<sup>4</sup> a duty that she exerted herself to fulfil as fittingly as she possibly could. But her sister Mary was sitting like a disciple at the Master's feet.

This difference in attitude did not seem to have been noticed by our Lord, and Martha, becoming impatient,

<sup>1</sup> Lightfoot, *Biblical Essays*, 38, quoted by Plummer, p. 290, n. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. Vincent, R.B. (1914), pp. 438 ff.; Dalman, *Itinéraires*, pp. 325 ff.

<sup>3</sup> The name is common enough, and is found in the ancient cemetery at Bethania itself, along with Eleazar and Simon.

<sup>4</sup> This expression 'the Lord' is often used by S. Luke ; cp. vii, 13 ; xi, 39 ; xii, 42 ; xiii, 15 ; xvii, 5, 6 ; xviii, 6 ; xix, 8 ; xxii, 61.

approached Him with these words of complaint : ' Lord, hast Thou no care that my sister hath left me alone to serve? Speak to her, therefore, that she help me.' Mary remained silent, but Jesus replied with affectionate emphasis : ' Martha, Martha,<sup>1</sup> thou art careful and art troubled about many things. But one thing is necessary. Mary hath chosen the best part which shall not be taken away from her.' On this reply, S. Augustine comments : ' Mary was listening, entranced by the gentle words of Christ, her heart held captive by Him. When she heard her sister's appeal, how great was her fear that she would hear Him say : " Rise up, and help thy sister," for she was held captive by a potent charm. . . . But the Lord excuses her, and from that moment she listens without fear.'<sup>2</sup>

Many lessons have been drawn from this reply of our Blessed Lord, such as the superiority of contemplation over action, and of the future over the present life, and all quite legitimately ; but the first and immediate message of Jesus' words is that of the Sermon of the Mount : ' Seek ye, therefore, first the kingdom of God and His justice : and all these things shall be added unto you.' ' In Heaven,' as S. Augustine (617) tells us, ' the toil of many hands passes away, and charity born of unity remains.' But even here below, the energies of a truly Christian life do not tend to be scattered over a thousand perishable goods, but rather to be concentrated on the quest of the kingdom of God. It was this that S. Paul inculcated on the faithful of his time : ' . . . I would have you to be without solicitude. He that is without a wife is solicitous of the things that belong to the Lord : how he may please God. . . . And I speak for your profit . . . for that . . . which may give you power to attend upon the Lord, without impediment' (1 Cor. vii, 32-35). Beyond all doubt, to have an opportunity of serving God is a great grace<sup>3</sup>, and it will always be an honour to Martha to have been the hostess of the Lord ; but she should have fulfilled this ministry without anxiety or pre-occupation, with eyes and heart fixed on the one thing necessary.

Nor is it without reason that the Church makes us read this particular Gospel on Feasts of our Blessed Lady.

<sup>1</sup> This repetitive form of address is peculiar to Luke ; cp. viii, 24 ; xxii, 31 ; Acts ix, 4 ; xxii, 7 ; xxvi, 14.

<sup>2</sup> *Serm.* 104 (P.L., XXXVIII, 616). <sup>3</sup> Cp. S. Augustine, *Serm.* 103, 613.

More than Martha, she was the servant of the Lord ; unaided she nourished and reared Him ; but at the same time like Mary—and again, more than she—did she listen to His words and cherish them in her heart : ‘ Blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it.’

### V. *The Prayer.*

Among all the evangelists it is S. Luke who has preserved most carefully for us the teaching of Jesus about prayer, both by precept and example ;<sup>1</sup> and it is in the part of his Gospel that we are studying at the moment that he has brought together the most precious of our Lord’s instruction on the point—namely, the Lord’s Prayer, and the parable of the importunate friend.

In S. Matthew we find the Our Father included in the Sermon on the Mount ; but a brief study of the context will suffice for us to recognize here an interpolation on the part of the evangelist himself. Christ’s precepts concerning almsgiving, prayer, and fasting, form a group whose three members are strictly parallel with each other, namely, vi, 1-4, 5-6, 16-18. Three times in succession Christ reminds His disciples of the hypocritical practices of the Pharisees, and thrice He repeats the words : ‘ they have received their reward ’ ; going on immediately to enjoin His disciples to perform these works of religion in secret, again adding each time a kind of formula : ‘ thy Father who seeth in secret will repay thee.’ Now, in the central part of this consistent whole, we notice some verses about prayer, having no parallel in the other parts ; no longer is it a question of secret prayers, but simply of prayer in itself, made without vain repetitions after a form taught by the Lord to His disciples. It may be supposed, with great probability, that this teaching, given by Jesus on another occasion, has been recorded here by S. Matthew so that he may present as a whole the teaching of the Christian Gospel as to prayer.

<sup>1</sup> Thus our Lord prayed at His Baptism (iii, 21) ; He went apart, after a miracle, and prayed (v, 16) ; He passed the night in prayer before choosing His Apostles (vi, 12) ; He prayed apart, before S. Peter’s confession (ix, 18) ; it was ‘ while He prayed ’ that He was transfigured (ix, 29) ; it was the example of His own prayer that called for the Apostles’ question (xi, 1) ; He prayed for Peter (xxii, 32) ; and in the Garden (xxii, 41-44) ; and He prayed on the Cross itself (xxiii, 34-46). Cp. Valensin-Huby, p. 172.



This hypothesis is confirmed by S. Luke, who does not assign the teaching of the Our Father to the Sermon on the Mount, but much later, in that collection of discourses, parables and miracles which he has grouped around our Lord's journey from Galilee to Jerusalem. As we have already remarked, it is, more often than not, very difficult to determine the setting of time and place of the incidents recorded in these particular chapters. We meet the same difficulty here, where we read (xi, 1) : ' And it came to pass that as He was in a certain place praying, when He ceased, one of His disciples said to Him : Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. And He said to them : When you pray, say : Father, hallowed be Thy name . . . ' The question arises whether it is possible to clarify the indeterminate character of this passage. J. Armitage Robinson has tried to do so.<sup>1</sup> No doubt this is a matter in which conjecture alone is possible, but in such cases conjecture has a value of its own. The event recorded by S. Luke immediately before (x, 38-42) is our Lord's visit to Martha and Mary. The evangelist does not tell us the scene of this episode but merely that it took place in ' a certain town,' but we know from S. John that the two sisters in question lived in Bethania (xi, 1), a village situated near Jerusalem, ' about fifteen furlongs off ' (xi, 18), on the actual site of the present village of that name, on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives. If, therefore, we may legitimately connect with each other these two incidents thus recorded by S. Luke, we shall look for the scene of our Lord's own prayer not far from Bethania, and the Mount of Olives. Nor is this proposed identification a new one, for on the western side of the Mount of Olives, a little below the Sanctuary of the Ascension, the church of the *Pater Noster* was built, which the Crusaders restored and enlarged. In 1869 the Princess de la Tour d'Auvergne bought the ground and built there the monastery of the *Pater*, of which the French Carmelites took possession in 1876. Perhaps we can fix the spot with still greater precision. Both S. Matthew (xxvi, 36) and S. Mark (xiv, 32) tell us that the scene of our Lord's agony was a piece of land (*χωρίον*) called Gethsemani. The word as used by both evangelists always means<sup>2</sup> a plot of

<sup>1</sup> On the locality in which the Lord's Prayer was given, in F. H. Chase, *The Lord's Prayer in the Early Church*, pp. 123-125.

<sup>2</sup> John iv, 5; Acts i, 18-19; iv, 34; v, 3-8; xxviii, 7.

ground belonging to a particular person. S. John (xviii, 1) says still more definitely : ' Jesus . . . went forth with His disciples over the brook Cedron, where there was a garden into which He entered with His disciples. And Judas also, who betrayed Him, knew the place : because Jesus had often resorted thither together with His disciples.' This spot, therefore, was a familiar one to our Lord, who often took His disciples there with Him ; and it does not seem rash to suppose that He was also there with them when, after Himself praying, He taught them the Lord's Prayer.<sup>1</sup> If this is so, His words indeed acquire a profound significance when we think of them as uttered in the very garden where later on He is to wrestle unto blood in prayer, and once more bid His disciples ' watch ye ; and pray that you enter not into temptation.' It was this very thing that He had told them to ask for in the prayer He had taught them : ' Lead us not into temptation.'

On this hypothesis the scene before us has something solemn and almost tragic about it, and the Our Father itself seems like an anticipatory echo of our Lord's own last prayer. But apart from theories of any kind, it is sufficiently precious to us to merit, as much as any passage of the Gospel, all the loving attention that we are able to give it. For the rest there is no passage which has been more studied, from the earliest days of the Christian Church.<sup>2</sup> Apart from the various commentaries on the Gospels and on the Sermon on the Mount, mention may be made of the treatises of Tertullian, S. Cyprian, Origen and S. Gregory of Nyssa. Even before the commentators arose, Christian sentiment was much attached to the passage : it became the Christian's daily prayer. As early as the *Didache* (viii, 2, 3),

<sup>1</sup> Fr. Abel (*Jérusalem*, II, p. 375) makes use of a passage from S. Mark (xi, 23-26) in the same sense. The evangelist is recording a teaching given by Christ on the double subject of pardon and prayer, the last words of which especially are a repetition of a clause of the ' Our Father ' : ' And when you shall stand to pray, forgive, if you have aught against any man : that your Father also, who is in heaven, may forgive you your sins.' This teaching on prayer was given by Jesus Christ when passing the Mount of Olives, on the second day after the triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Further, if we see in this combination of circumstances a resemblance to S. Luke's narrative where the ' Our Father ' is represented as having been taught in a place apparently near the village of Martha and Mary, we shall naturally end by fixing the scene of the teaching of the Lord's Prayer to the disciples on the Mount of Olives, in the very spot where our Lord's teachings were habitually given.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. *Histoire du Dogme de la Trinité*, II, pp. 183 ff.

we read : ‘ Do not pray like the hypocrites ; but pray in this manner as our Lord has commanded in His Gospel : Our Father . . . pray thus three times a day.’

Before setting ourselves, in our turn, to study the Lord’s Prayer, an attempt must be made to solve a question which rises inevitably from a comparison between S. Matthew and S. Luke. Not only is the historical setting different, as we have already seen, but there are notable divergences in the text of the prayer itself. The two passages read as follows :

(Matthew vi, 9-13) : ‘ Thus therefore shall you pray : Our Father who art in heaven. Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our supersubstantial bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation. But deliver us from evil. Amen.’

(Luke xi, 2-4) : ‘ And He said to them : When you pray, say : Father, hallowed be Thy name Thy kingdom come. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation.’

Origen<sup>1</sup> already, in stressing these differences, concluded that the evangelists were recording neither the same fact nor the same prayer, and Chase writes in the same sense (p. 11) : ‘ As the occasions described by the two evangelists differ, so do also the versions of the Prayer which they respectively give. That contained in St. Luke’s Gospel diverges from that contained in St. Matthew’s both in regard to the length of the Prayer, and in the wording of the clauses which are common to both Gospels.’ In the opinion of that author (Chase), the Lord’s Prayer was taught by Christ on two separate occasions, once to the multitude in the Sermon on the Mount, and once to the disciples in private intercourse. But this theory does not seem very probable. If, as appears likely, the Sermon on the Mount took place before the private conversation referred to, it is difficult to understand why the disciples should have asked the Lord to give them instruction of a kind that they had already received, and of which, none the less, they seemed to have no recollection at all. As we have seen, there is no difficulty in explaining the difference of setting in the two accounts as being due to a process

<sup>1</sup> *De orat.*, xviii. P.G., XI, 473.

of redaction on the part of S. Matthew, who has brought together in the same discourse all the teaching of our Lord relating to the subject in hand. It is the same problem that we have encountered in the case of the Beatitudes, where, again, S. Luke's version is shorter, a number of beatitudes being missing, while those included are found in a more precise form. And it is the same with the Our Father. The third petition : ' Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven ' is missing in Luke, as also the second part of the sixth : ' But deliver us from evil ' ; in Luke, instead of ' Our Father who art in heaven,' we have simply ' Father ' ; once more, S. Matthew uses the expression : ' Our debts, while S. Luke has ' our sins.'

Such variations should not surprise us in a form of words from the very beginning so often on the lips of Christian people and which naturally became modified by local usage, here and there. We find something similar in France to-day, where some are found saying '*notre pain quotidien*' and others '*notre pain de chaque jour*.' These variations, in fact, multiply very quickly ; the tradition of the manuscripts and the writings of the Fathers bear many traces of the process. For example, the version of the Our Father found in the *Didache* (viii, 2), which in other respects follows that of S. Matthew, ends with the following doxology (missing in the best MSS. but found in many others) :<sup>1</sup> ' For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory ' ; while, in S. Luke's version, instead of : ' Thy kingdom come,' certain Fathers read : ' May thy Holy Spirit come among us and purify us.'<sup>2</sup> That differences of this kind should have slipped into the text from the very beginning is a thing that need not cause us any surprise.

Here, as everywhere in his Gospel, S. Matthew seems to give the most literal rendering of our Lord's words. In him we can detect most clearly the accent of the Jew, as in the opening petition itself : ' Our Father who art in heaven,' and in the phrase ' our debts,' where S. Luke has ' our sins.' Besides, the Church has constantly preferred Matthew's version ; liturgical use, as the *Didache* bears witness, early

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Chase, p. 168.

<sup>2</sup> So S. Gregory of Nyssa (P.G., XLIV, col. 1157). Cp. Chase, pp. 25-28. Harnack (*Sprüche und Reden Jesu*, p. 47) regards this variant as the primitive text of S. Luke ; while Von Soden (P.R.E., xx, 439, 9) with still less probability sees in it a marginal note containing the prayer taught by John the Baptist to his disciples.

revealed this process, and we shall meet it over and over again.<sup>1</sup>

Before discussing the Lord's Prayer in detail, let us stop for a moment to consider its origin and general character. Tertullian, recalling the passage in S. Luke, writes : ' John the Baptist also had taught his disciples to pray : but everything done by John was in preparation for Christ to such an extent that . . . the whole work of the Precursor, with his Spirit, passed into our Lord's hands. Moreover, no formula of prayer taught by John is recorded in the Gospel : it would but have contained earthly words, falling dead before the words coming from heaven. " He who is of the earth," says he, " speaks the things of the earth ; but he who is of heaven speaks of that which he has seen." ' <sup>2</sup> And S. Cyprian says : ' Let us pray then, dearly beloved brethren, as God our Master has taught us. That will be a prayer dear and familiar to God, in which are repeated His own words, and in which the prayer of Christ Himself ascends to His ears. When we make our prayer, may the Father recognize the words of His Son ; may He who dwells in us—in our very heart—be also on our lips ; and since He our advocate is near the Father, when we poor sinners pray for our sins and the remission of our faults, let us repeat our advocate's words.' <sup>3</sup>

The Fathers also comment on the collective character of the Prayer : ' We may be certain before all else,' says S. Cyprian, ' that the Teacher of Peace and Master of Unity would not wish our prayer to be of an isolated and solitary kind, or that when the Christian prays, he should pray only for himself. We do not say : " My Father, who is in Heaven," or " Give me this day my daily bread " ; it is not for ourselves alone that we implore the remission of sins, or ask not to be led into temptation or to be delivered from evil. This is a public and general prayer, and when we pray we do not pray for one person alone, but for the whole people ; for this whole people makes up one body of which we are a part. The God of Peace and Master of Concord, He who has taught us unity, has wished that each should pray for all, just as we are all carried together on His sacred breast.' <sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> On the comparison between the two texts, cp. Votaw, *Dictionary of the Bible*, V, pp. 32-34.

<sup>2</sup> *De Oratione*, 1 ; P.L., I, col. 1152.

<sup>3</sup> *De Dominica Oratione*, 3, Ed. Hartel, I, p. 268.

<sup>4</sup> *De Dominica Oratione*, 8.

In the same way S. Chrysostom insists on the collective character of all the petitions in the Lord's Prayer : ' Our Father, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven, give us our daily bread, forgive us our sins, lead us not into temptation ; deliver us : He wants us always to speak in the plural so that there may not be in us any trace of anger against our neighbour.'<sup>1</sup>

We must not conclude from all this that the Our Father was composed by Christ with a view to liturgical use ; a long time was to elapse before such a use was in existence at all, and our Lord's first object was to teach His disciples to pray. But even in private prayer He wished them not to forget their brethren, or to cut themselves off from others, but to love to feel that they were all one, sons of the same Father and disciples of the same Master. Besides, when we recite this prayer it is surely a strength and consolation to us to remember that great bond of Christian unity that unites us to the whole Church, both to those who are praying at the present day, and who have prayed thus ever since the time of Christ Himself.<sup>2</sup>

As we shall see later on, this prayer expresses our Lord's own sentiments when in addressing His Father, with the obvious exception of one petition. Christ has nothing for which to gain forgiveness and cannot ask for it ; for the rest it would be seriously to misunderstand His unique Sonship if we regarded Him as taking His place in the ranks of the faithful, so far as this matter of prayer is concerned. Truly, He teaches His disciples to say ' Our Father,' but He never speaks in this way Himself. ' Your Father ' and ' My Father '<sup>3</sup> are the phrases used by Him.

Having thus emphasized the impassable gulf that separates Christ and ourselves, we must none the less take note of that participation in His unique Sonship which He deigns to grant us, and which gives us the right to say ' Our Father.'

<sup>1</sup> Hom. xix, 7. P.G., LVI, 283.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. Newman, *Forms of Private Prayer, Parochial and Plain Sermons*, I, 269.

<sup>3</sup> This was long since observed by S. Augustine : '*Non tamen sicut Christi Pater, ita et noster Pater: numquam enim Christus ita nos coniunxit, ut nullam distinctionem faceret inter nos et se. Ille enim Filius æqualis Patri, ille æternus cum Patre Patrique coæternus; nos autem facti per Filium, adoptati per unicum. Proinde numquam auditum est de ore Domini nostri Jesu Christi, cum ad discipulos loqueretur, dixisse illum de Deo summo Patre suo, Pater noster; sed aut, Pater meus, dixit, aut Pater vester.*' (In Joan., tract. xxi, 3; XXXV, 1565-6.)

Origen, who knew the Holy Scriptures better than anyone, long ago remarked in his commentary on the Our Father : ' It would be worth while to search the Old Testament, if somewhere there we could find a prayer in which God is addressed as " Father " : for our part we have searched as carefully as we are able, and up to the present we have found none. We do not mean that God is not called Father, and those who believe in Him the children of God ; we only say we have found no prayer in which man dares to address God by the name of Father, as our Redeemer here teaches us to do.'

And after having recalled those Old Testament passages in which Almighty God is spoken of as the Father of Israel or of the just, Origen concludes : ' The very texts we have quoted show those who are called God's children as being in reality His subjects ; and so justify the saying of S. Paul that " as long as the heir is a child, he differeth nothing from a servant . . . but is under tutor and governor until the time appointed by the father "' (Gal. iv, 1-2).<sup>1</sup>

' *Who art in Heaven.*' This qualification, which is very frequent in S. Matthew, but exceptional in S. Luke,<sup>2</sup> was

<sup>1</sup> In the Judaism of our Lord's time the name of Father was sometimes given to God in prayer ; cp. Dalman, *Die Worte Jesu*, p. 150 ; Nestle, art. *Lord's Prayer*, *Encyclopædia Biblica*, 2822. Haussleiter, art. *Vater-unser*, *P.R.E.*, XX, 434. Thus we read in *Schemonê-Esrê* (existing text), 5: ' Recall us, our Father, to Thy Law, and draw us, our King, into Thy service, and grant us to be converted by a perfect repentance before Thy face. Blessed be Thou, O Lord, who accepteth repentance.' 6: ' Forgive us, our Father, for we have sinned ; spare us, our King, for we have committed faults. Very willingly dost Thou spare and forgive. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, who art full of mercy and forgivest much.' (So Schürer, II, 539 ; cp. Dalman, p. 299 : ' Palestinian Recension, 4 and 6.) More striking parallels are to be found in the *Habinenu* : but this prayer, really an abridged recension of the *Schemonê-Esrê* (Dalman, 304), is attributed to Schemuel, who died in 254. We can compare further the *Kaddish* of the Jewish Liturgy (Dalman, p. 305), which begins thus : ' Magnified and sanctified be His great name in the world which He hath created according to His will. May He establish His kingdom during your life and during your days, and during the life of all the house of Israel, even speedily and at a near time, and say ye, Amen.' We may therefore find Jewish formulas similar to the opening words of the ' Our Father ' and its two first petitions, but there the resemblance stops. We can understand well enough that our Lord in giving His disciples a form of prayer would have made use of expressions already familiar to them ; but in adopting them He would have given them a new value. The title of *Father*, sometimes given to Almighty God in Jewish forms of prayer, is more often than not associated with that of King, which makes clearer its true meaning in this connection. It expresses veneration rather than tenderness recalling the words of Malachias : ' If then I be a father, where is my honour ? ' rather than the prayers or parables of the Gospels.

<sup>2</sup> Only in ii, 13 ; cp. x, 21 : ' Father, Lord of heaven.'

habitual among the Jews in our Lord's time, and it is to be remarked that He never employed it when praying to His Father.<sup>1</sup> This was because He had no other Father. On the other hand, so far as His disciples were concerned, He followed the common use, and while exhorting them to call no one father here below (Matt. xxiii, 9), He bade them pray to their Father 'in heaven.' In this way He respected the traditional custom, and, above all, raised the thought of the praying Christian to heaven, from the very first words turning him from thoughts of earth to those of heaven, and inspiring him with sentiments of reverence and trust. The Father to whom He prays is on high, above all our miseries and weaknesses and yet at the same time so intimately near us. This is the Father 'who seeth in secret.'

'*Hallowed be Thy name.*' In the Old Testament, the term 'name' often has the value of a simple circumlocution signifying God Himself; but, again, often it expresses all that God reveals of Himself, or, if we like, His attributes as known, loved, and revered by men.

Thus, 'In Judæa God is known: His name is great in Israel' (Ps. lxxvi, 2): 'All they that love Thy name shall glory in Thee' (Ps. v, 12): 'Let them trust in thee that know thy name' (Ps. ix, 11): 'Thy name, O Lord, is for ever: Thy memorial, O Lord, unto all generations' (Ps. cxxxiv, 13): 'But when He shall see His children, the works of My hands in the midst of Him, sanctifying My name. And they shall sanctify the Holy One of Jacob: and shall glorify the God of Israel' (Isa. xxix, 23): 'For, from the rising of the sun even to the going down, My name is great among the Gentiles: and in every place there is sacrifice and there is offered to My name a clean oblation. For My name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of Hosts' (Mal. i, 11). Jesus Himself spoke in the same sense, when, on the last day of His life, addressing His Father, He said: 'I have manifested Thy name to the men whom Thou hast given Me out of the world' (John xvii, 6).

Further, the passages just quoted, particularly Isa. xxix, 23, make clear in what the 'hallowing' of God's name consists: the fear, reverence, and worship due to God are offered to Him at the hands of men. In Isaiah, too, we find the noblest revelation of God's holiness that the Old Testament contains: 'In the year that King Ozias died,

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Dalman, *op. cit.*, 157.



I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne high and elevated : and his train filled the temple. Upon it stood the Seraphims : the one had six wings, and the other had six wings : with two they covered his face, and with two they covered his feet, and with two they flew. And they cried one to another, and said : Holy, Holy, Holy, the Lord God of Hosts, all the earth is full of His glory. And the lintels of the doors were moved at the voice of him that cried : and the house was filled with smoke. And I said : Woe is me, because I have held my peace ; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people that hath unclean lips, and I have seen with my eyes the King, the Lord of Hosts' (Is. vi, 1-5). Tertullian reminds his readers of this vision when commenting on this petition of the Lord's Prayer.<sup>1</sup>

Doubtless, God's name is always holy, but it is not honoured always and everywhere in the same degree. 'If,' says S. Augustine, 'we ask for this, it is not that God's name is not holy, but that we wish it to be regarded as holy by all men ; that is, we wish God to be well known to all, that there should be nothing here below that they look upon as so holy, nothing that they so fear to injure or despise.'<sup>2</sup> Like the rest, this petition is universal in scope : we wish to see the Divine Name hallowed on every hand, but still, in ourselves first. 'God has said to us : Be holy because I am holy ; therefore, we ask that we, who were sanctified in Baptism may be enabled to persevere in the sanctifying process thus begun ; and this is our daily request, since we need daily sanctification to purge the everyday faults which we commit daily.'<sup>3</sup> 'Almighty God,' says Gregory of Nyssa, 'curses those who, by their sins, cause His Name to be blasphemed among the nations' (Isa. lii, 5) ; so we humbly ask Him that we may in no wise be of those scandalous ones, but, on the contrary, may so live that men may see our good works and glorify our Father, who is in heaven.'<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 'Quando non sanctum et sanctificatum est per semetipsum nomen Dei, cum ceteros sanctificet ex semetipso ? Cui illa angelorum circumstantia non cessant dicere : Sanctus, Sanctus ! Proinde igitur et nos angelorum, si meminerimus, candidati iam hinc cælestem illam in Deum vocem et officium futurae claritatis ediximus.'

<sup>2</sup> *De Sermone Domini in monte*, 5, 19.

<sup>3</sup> S. Cyprian, 12.

<sup>4</sup> P.G., XLIV, col. 1153. Thus we find an echo of the Lord's Prayer in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. v, 16).

'*Thy kingdom come.*' The first petition of the Lord's Prayer has defined the end towards which everything tends, i.e., the hallowing of the Divine Name ; the two following, closely connected with each other as they are, have for their object the fulfilment of the conditions of this glorifying of Almighty God : the coming of His kingdom, first of all. By this is to be understood a state of holiness and justice, to which Almighty God will be the Master acknowledged and obeyed by all.

As our Lord often taught in the Gospels, this kingdom which He came to proclaim and establish here below, must develop gradually like seed or leaves, and it is this progressive expansion that we must look for, in the first instance, both in ourselves and in the world as a whole. But the fulfilment of this growth with the establishment of God's kingdom in uncontested and absolute sway will only be realized at the second coming of Christ, by Whom it will be inaugurated at the end of the world. Then will resound the triumphant canticles of the Apocalypse (xi, 15) : 'The kingdom of this world is become our Lord's and His Christ's. And He will reign for ever and ever. Amen.' And again (xi, 17) : 'We give thanks, O Lord, God Almighty : who art and who wast to come : because Thou hast taken to Thee Thy great power and hast reigned.' And once more (xii, 10) : 'Now is come salvation and strength and the kingdom of our God and the power of His Christ.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The majority of the Fathers, too, insist on the eschatological character of this petition. Thus Tertullian, V, 1158, writes : 'Si ad Dei voluntatem et ad nostram suspensionem pertinet regni dominici representatio, quomodo quidam protractum quemdam sæculo postulant, cum regnum Dei, quod ut adveniat oramus, ad consummationem sæculi tendat ? Optamus maturius regnare et non diutius servire. . . . Quam celeriter veniat, Domine, regnum tuum ! Votum christianorum, confusio nationum, exultatio angelorum, propter quod conflictamur, imo potius propter quod oramus.' Cyprian, XIII, 275 : 'Nostrum regnum petimus advenire a Deo nobis repromissum ; Christi sanguine et passione quæsitum, ut qui in sæculo ante servivimus postmodum Christo dominante regnemus, sicut ipse pollicetur et dicit : Venite, benedicti Patris mei, percipite regnum quod vobis paratum est ab origine mundi.' Augustine, XX, 1278 : 'Deinde sequitur : Adveniat regnum tuum. Sicut ipse Dominus in Evangelio docet, tunc futurum esse iudicii idem, cum Evangelium prædicatum fuerit in omnibus gentibus, quæ res pertinet ad sanctificationem nominis Dei. Non enim et hic ita dictum est : adveniat regnum tuum, quasi nunc Deus non regnet. . . . Adveniat ergo accipiendum est, manifestetur hominibus. . . . Nulli autem licebit ignorare regnum Dei, cum eius Unigenitus non solum intelligibiliter, sed etiam visibiliter in homine dominico de cælo venerit iudicare vivos et mortuos.'—(In his *Retractationes* (I, 19, 8 ; XXXIII, 616), Saint Augustine corrects the expression 'homo dominicus,' but not the rest of the text.)

'*Thy will be done.*' This petition is closely connected with the preceding one, for, surely, the kingdom of God is nothing else than the recognition of His will, as the sovereign, universal, absolute rule of all life. At the same time, the one petition determines more clearly the meaning of the other. Those who expect that the kingdom of God will be inaugurated by some cataclysm—almost by some stage effect—are here reminded by our Lord that this kingdom will be established only little by little, by the gradual conformity of the wills of men to that of God. We shall hear an echo of this prayer later in the garden: 'Father, if this chalice may not pass away, but I must drink it, Thy will be done' (Matt. xxvi, 42).

No doubt it is not precisely the same sentiment that is present on both occasions. When Jesus taught His disciples the *Our Father*, He meant the words 'Thy will be done' to be the expression of a passionate and fervent wish; while in the garden it revealed a spirit of utter resignation, the most intense anguish notwithstanding. Nevertheless, the two sentiments, different as they are, are inspired by the same love; for Christ, the will of God was the sovereign Good; to fulfil it is His very food, and only task on earth (John iv, 34; xviii, 4). In times of calm it was His sole joy, and in moments of anguish He concentrated upon it with all His strength.

'*On earth as it is in heaven.*' On this subject the catechism of the Council of Trent has pronounced as follows:

'It falls to the pastor to call the attention of the faithful to the fact that these words "on earth as it is in heaven" could equally well be annexed to each of the preceding petitions, thus: "Hallowed be Thy name"—*on earth as it is in heaven*; "Thy kingdom come"—*on earth as it is in heaven*; "Thy will be done"—*on earth as it is in heaven.*' The same interpretation had already been advanced by Origen who shows how in heaven God's name is revered as holy, His kingdom is established, His will fulfilled; and we ask of the Lord that all this may be realized on earth as perfectly as in heaven (26).

Thus, as we may see from these passages, the eschatological interpretation of this petition of the 'Our Father' has plenty of Catholic authority behind it, and if it has also found defenders in some radical exegetists of our own time (e.g. Loisy, I, 604; cp. Haussleiter, *P.R.E.*, XX, 437), this is in itself no reason to suspect or discard it.

'Give us this day our daily bread.' The three first petitions had for their object eternal goods : the hallōwing of God's name, the coming of His kingdom, the fulfilment of His will. No doubt we may experience their beginnings here below, but their full enjoyment is reserved for heaven. And we are not in heaven, but on earth, struggling with difficulties of every kind in the physical and moral order alike. Our Blessed Lord knows this and, as being Himself subject to trials, He teaches us to ask of God the necessary graces for this warfare. This is the object of the three last petitions of the Lord's prayer. And in the first of these we ask for our daily bread.

As to the nature of this bread, S. Augustine has written : 'By our daily bread is meant either everything necessary for our present life, or the sacrament of Christ's Body, which we receive daily, or that spiritual food of which our Lord spoke when He said : "Labour not for the meat that perisheth," and again : "I am the living bread which came down from heaven."' <sup>1</sup>

We find the same three interpretations in other Fathers, and we may remark especially the stress laid by them on the fact that our Lord was here alluding to the Eucharistic Bread,<sup>2</sup> and we may observe how, at any rate for the majority of these Fathers, the Bread of the Eucharist is 'the daily bread.' In this connection some light is thrown on the passage in question by S. Augustine, who calls attention to a difference between the discipline of East and West. 'Many in the East,' he says, 'do not communicate every day at the Lord's Supper' (26), and in this fact finds a reason for doubting that this petition is to be understood of the Eucharistic Bread. He himself prefers the third of the

<sup>1</sup> *De sermone Christi*, II, vii, 25, 1280.

<sup>2</sup> So Tertullian : 'Panem nostrum cotidianum da nobis hodie spiritualiter potius intelligamus. Christus enim panis noster est, quia vita Christus et vita panis. Ego sum, inquit, panis vitæ. Et paulo supra : Panis est sermo Dei vivi, qui descendit de cælis. Tum quod et corpus eius in pane censetur. Hoc est corpus meum. Itaque petendo panem cotidianum perpetuitatem postulamus in Christo, et individuitatem a corpore eius' (6).

And S. Cyprian : 'Potest et spiritualiter et simpliciter intelligi, quia et uterque intellectus utilitate divina proficit ad salutem. Nam panis vitæ Christus est. . . . Hunc autem panem dari nobis cotidie postulamus, ne qui in Christo sumus et eucharistiam eius cotidie ad cibum salutis accipimus, intercedente aliquo graviore delicto . . . a Christi corpore separemur. . . . Et ideo panem nostrum, id est Christum, dare nobis cotidie petimus, ut qui in Christo manemus et vivimus a sanctificatione eius et corpore non recedamus' (18).

three interpretations suggested by him, and says that if any one wishes to adopt another one he had better take all three.<sup>1</sup>

None the less it seems better to retain the first as expressing the primary sense of the passage, the 'bread' for which we seek being that which our daily physical nourishment requires. True, whenever we say the Our Father we shall think also of the 'bread of life' given to us by Christ for the nourishment of our souls; but this will only be a secondary application of the passage, and not its primary and literal sense.<sup>2</sup>

'*Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.*' (Luke: 'Forgive us our sins as we also forgive every one that is indebted to us.') The two versions only differ in a mere shade of meaning, and here again it would seem that S. Matthew is nearer to the primitive version than

Also Origen writes: 'Since there are some who imagine that we are told to ask for material bread, it is necessary to refute their error and establish the truth on the subject of this substantial bread we receive. . . . The true bread is that which nourishes the true man made in the image of God, and which, in nourishing him, gives him a resemblance to his Creator. And who can give nourishment to the very essence of a man better than the Word?' (27).

And again S. Jerome: 'Quando petimus ut peculiarem vel præcipuum nobis Deus tribuat panem, illum petimus qui dicit: Ego sum panis vivus qui de cælo descendit' (i, 7).

<sup>1</sup> 'Si quis autem etiam de victu corporis necessario vel de sacramento dominici corporis istam sententiam vult accipere, oportet ut conjuncte accipiantur omnia tria; ut scilicet cotidianum panem simul petamus, et necessarium corpori, et sacratum visibilem, et invisibilem verbi Dei' (27).

<sup>2</sup> The word *ἐπιούσιος* which we translate 'daily,' is not without its own difficulties of interpretation. On this subject Origen had already written: 'It must be observed first of all, that the word was never employed by any Greek of literary attainment, nor did it occur in the common speech of the people, but seems to have been invented by the evangelists themselves' (27). Since Origen's time, after a fruitless search in Greek literature, the word was discovered at last in a mutilated papyrus, published by Sir Flinders Petrie, and subsequently by Father Preisigke, *Sammelbuch Griechischer Urkunden aus Ägypten*, I (Strasbourg, 1915), p. 522, n. 5224; cp. F. Zorrell, *Biblica*, 1925, pp. 321, 322; Bauer, s.v. *ἐπιούσιος*. Two renderings are proposed by Origen, as also with slightly different shades of meaning, by scholars of the present time. The first of these—preferred by Origen himself—tends to assimilate *ἐπιούσιος* to *περιούσιος*, thus connecting it with *ὄντα*; Origen then translates 'substantial' and also in the interests of his philosophical theories—'spiritual' bread. Others, he says, prefer to connect *ἐπιούσιος* with *ἐπιέναι* and to translate 'bread of the world to come.' S. Jerome translates—from S. Matthew's version—'supersubstantial' bread but adds: 'In Evangelio quod appellatur secundum Hebraeos, pro supersubstantiali pane reperi mahar quod dicitur crastinum; ut sit sensus Panem nostrum crastinum, id est, futurum da nobis hodie.' (43.) Similarly in a homily on Psalm cxxxv (*Anecdota Maredsolana*, ed. G. Morin, III, ii, 262): 'In Hebraico evangelio

S. Luke.<sup>1</sup> What is more important than these slight variations is our Lord's anxiety to make us learn the duty of forgiveness. He thought well to insert this clause in the prayer that He taught us in order that, in some sense, He might leave our fate in our own hands. We are all sinners and debtors to Almighty God, and insolvent debtors at that ; but God could certainly forgive our sins without any condition whatsoever. On the contrary, He ordained the moral law expressed in this petition that He might lay upon us the strictest obligation of mercy towards our fellow-men. In that way He would ensure the preservation among us all of peace, the most precious of all social blessings ; and secure in each of our hearts the reign of charity, the greatest treasure of every Christian soul. And that no one should pretend ignorance of this law, He has put it on our lips when

secundum Matthæum ita habet : Panem nostrum crastinum da nobis hodie hoc est, panem, quem daturus es nobis in regno tuo, da nobis hodie.' In these two interpretations we recognize the same two that were proposed by Origen ; and exegetes of to-day are still divided between them. Those who prefer the second view translate 'the bread of the day to come' (Chase, p. 44), or 'the bread of the future of all the time that I have yet to live' (Haussleiter, p. 440). No doubt this is more correct from the morphological point of view, but it is difficult to reconcile with our Lord's teaching as contained in the command : 'Be not . . . solicitous for the morrow' (Matt. vi, 34). The other school understand the petition in the sense : 'the bread necessary to life.' 'In the same way,' says Votaw (p. 37), 'that *πρὸς βίον* means *more than what is necessary*, so *ἐπιβίον* means *what is barely necessary* and no more.' This is S. Chrysostom's view : 'the bread necessary to our daily sustenance, so that we may concern ourselves neither with superfluities nor with to-morrow's needs' (*Hom.* xix, 5, 280). Similarly S. Gregory of Nyssa insists on the limits which our Lord would have us observe in our prayer : 'We ask for bread, and nothing more' (1169). And this was S. Paul's instruction to Timothy (1 Tim. vi, 8) : 'Having food and wherewith to be covered, with that we are content.' Cp. Cyprian, 19.

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Chase, *op. cit.*, pp. 54-7. S. Luke may have preferred the rendering 'sins' to 'debts,' the better to emphasize the religious bearing of the expression and to avoid the restricted sense of pecuniary obligation attached to it in the current Greek use. He has, however, kept the expression 'everyone indebted to us,' a fact which helps to guarantee the authenticity of the term 'debts' which, in any case, is supported by other passages in the Gospels. Thus, in speaking of the eighteen men who were crushed under the tower of Siloe, our Lord said : 'Think you that they also were debtors above all the men that dwelt in Jerusalem ?' (Luke xiii, 4). All men are insolvent debtors before God, who can only hope for the remission of their debts in so far as they themselves surrender their claims over their fellow-men (Matt. xviii, 23-5). Possibly, too, S. Luke has softened the expression in the second part of the petition, writing 'for we also forgive' instead of 'as we have also forgiven,' to avoid any appearance of proportion between our pardon and God's.

For the rest, the difference here is very slight, and all are agreed that in the matter of mercy as in all else, there is an infinite distance between ourselves and God.

we say our daily prayer ; and, not content with making us thus repeat this assurance to God, He returns to it at the end of the whole Prayer ; of all the petitions of the Our Father, the only one which He repeats is this one (Matt. vi, 14-15) : ' For if you will forgive men their offences, your heavenly Father will forgive you also your offences. But if you will not forgive men, neither will your Father forgive you your offences.'<sup>1</sup>

' *And lead us not into temptation. But deliver us from evil. Amen.*' In the first part of this petition two interesting variants are found in the Latin tradition. On this matter S. Augustine writes : ' Instead of saying, " Lead us not into temptation," many Christians in their prayers say, " Suffer us not to be led into temptation," while others, following S. Hilary, use the formula : " Let us not fall into a temptation that we are not able to bear." '<sup>2</sup>

In both these series of variants, which we meet with in other authors as well, the same thought is apparent : ' God does not tempt us, but He allows us to be tempted.' The French translation : ' Ne nous laissez pas succomber à la tentation ' clearly contains the same idea, to which Bossuet also alludes (27<sup>me</sup> journée), quoting S. James' words : ' God . . . tempteth no man ' (i, 13). ' It is therefore clear,' he goes on, ' that when we pray : " Lead us not into temptation " we must be understood in the sense : " Let us not fall into temptation," and this is the sense of S. Paul's words : " God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Chrysostom, 6-7, 281-284.

<sup>2</sup> ' Nonnulli codices habent " inducas," quod, tantumdem valere arbitror ; nam ex uno Graeco quod dictum est εἰσενέγκης utrumque translatum est. Multi autem precando ita dicunt : " Ne nos patiaris induci in tentationem," exponentes videlicet quomodo dictum sit " inducas." Non enim per seipsum inducit Deus, sed induci patitur eum quem suo auxilio deseruerit.' (Augustine, *De sermone Domini*, II, 9, 30, 1282). By the same, in his *De dono perseverantiae*, 6 (XLV, 1000) : ' Unde sic orant nonnulli et legitur in codicibus plurimis et hoc sic posuit beatissimus Cyprianus : " ne patiaris nos induci in tentationem." In Evangelio tamen Graeco nusquam inveni nisi " ne nos inferas in tentationem." ' Cp. Cyprian, 25, Chase, p. 63. S. Hilary, *In Psalm 118*, IX, 510 : ' Scientes quidem frequenter nos ab eo ob temptationes derelinqui, ut per eas fides nostra probabilis fiat. Verumtamen secundum prophetam ne nos penitus derelinquat deprecandus est ; ait enim : Non me derelinquas usquequaque nimis. Quod et in dominicae orationis ordine continetur, cum dicitur : Non derelinquas nos in temptatione quam ferre non possumus. Scit Apostolus derelinqui nos ad temptandum ; sed novit et mensuram infirmitatis nostrae Deum nosse, dicens : Fidelis est Deus, qui non permittat nos temptari super quam possumus.' Cp. Chase, p. 66.

tempted above that which you are able" (1 Cor. x, 13) : but our strength lies chiefly in our prayers.'

This interpretation is perfectly correct, so far as it goes, but it must be added that the original Greek word *πειρασμός* has a wider sense than 'temptation' and includes all kinds of trial—persecution, sickness, suffering, distress. It was in this sense that at the Last Supper our Lord told His disciples: 'You are they who have continued with Me in My temptations. And I dispose to you, as My Father hath disposed to Me, a kingdom' (Luke xxii, 28, 29) : and that S. James wrote : 'My brethren, count it all joy, when you fall into divers temptations : knowing that the trying of your faith worketh patience' (James i, 2-3).

Thus Origen, in commenting on this petition, observes that we do not ask Almighty God to spare us every trial, which would be impossible, seeing that human life is one long story of trial and trouble. It would even be harmful, for trials are useful to us in promoting self-knowledge and humility, and stimulating our service of Almighty God. We do pray that we may not be forced into a struggle beyond our powers and that we may be kept from yielding in the fight. We find an echo of this prayer in our Lord's counsel to His Apostles in the garden : 'Pray, lest ye enter into temptation' (Luke xxii, 40, 46). They were not to ask to be exempt from temptation, but that they should not fail.

'*But deliver us from evil.*' This petition, not found in S. Luke, is not distinct from the preceding one ; on the other hand it is closely connected with it, and, in fact, completes its meaning.<sup>1</sup> The question arises whether '*malo*' is to be taken as masculine or neuter, in other words, whether we should translate : 'Deliver us from the evil one,' or 'Deliver us from evil.' Generally speaking, the Greek Fathers interpret in the former sense, the alternative rendering being adopted by most of the Latins. Present-day scholars are divided on this point,<sup>2</sup> which is not easy to

<sup>1</sup> 'At vero quod ille in ultimo posuit : "Sed libera nos a malo," iste non posuit, ut intelligeremus ad illud superius, quod de tentatione dictum est, pertinere. Ideo quippe ait : "Sed libera," non ait : "Et libera," tamquam unam petitionem esse demonstrans (noli hoc, sed hoc) : ut sciat unusquisque in eo se liberari a malo, quod non infertur in tentationem' (Augustine, *Enchir.*, 116, 30, XL, 286).

<sup>2</sup> English writers, following Lightfoot, translate : 'Deliver us from the Evil One,' that is, the tempter ; they compare John v, 18, 19 : 'We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not : but the generation of God preserveth Him and the wicked one toucheth Him not. We know that we



decide. If we were dealing with a passage in S. John's Gospel, there is no doubt that the rendering in which '*malo*' is taken as referring to a person would be the more probable, for S. John is fond of putting Christ in opposition to the Devil, His personal enemy, and that of all His followers. But this is not S. Matthew's way of writing, and we may safely adhere to the interpretation common to the Latin Fathers. For the rest, there is very little point in the discussion: whatever the grammatical gender of this particular word, the general sense of the petition is the same: we ask God our Father to keep us safe from all evil influences, that we may be His and His alone.

At the beginning of his treatise on prayer, Origen reminds us that when we pray, we are not alone, but that the Word of God joins with us, as also the angels and saints (II). More especially should this thought strike us when we recite the Lord's Prayer, for then all our brethren in Christ pray with us in the same way, and we are conscious that these identical petitions have been incessantly ascending to God our Father from the earliest days of the Church herself: and when we repeat them in our turn, we feel ourselves in communion with those countless numbers of saints whose lives hallowed the earth and who now people heaven. To use a figure of speech which was a favourite with S. Clement of Alexandria, it is Christ Himself who leads this choir of prayer. It is true, as we have seen, that the *Our Father* contains certain petitions that our Lord could never have uttered in His own name, for example, 'forgive us our debts' and 'deliver us from the evil one,' even if He has placed this petition as it stands, upon *our* lips, for as He Himself said on the last day of His life, Satan had 'not anything' in Him (John xiv, 30). But, with these reservations, it is easy enough to see that the prayer dictated to us by the

are of God and that the whole world is seated in wickedness' (cp. Westcott). 1 Thess. iii, 3: 'God is faithful, who will strengthen and keep you from evil' (cp. Milligan); and especially John xvii, 15: 'I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from evil' (cp. Westcott). Chase, especially, has made himself the champion of this view (pp. 71-167).

Other scholars, and especially Haussleiter, prefer to take '*malo*' as a neuter and compare 2 Tim. iv, 18: 'The Lord hath delivered me from every evil work and will preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom. To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.' This was also S. Cyprian's view: 'At the end we put: "Deliver us from evil," by which we understand all those hindrances that the enemy hath devised against us in this world' (27, 287). Cp. Augustine, XXXV, 1284.

Master consists of petitions of which, generally speaking, He Himself made constant use. If we read once again our Lord's last prayer as recorded by S. John (John xvii)<sup>1</sup> we shall not find there the Our Father in its concise form. On the contrary, we have a long, free outpouring of our Lord's Sacred Heart, in which He recommends Himself, His disciples and all His works to His Father's care. But precisely the same sentiments breathe through the two prayers, and the same blessings are implored—the hallowing of the Heavenly Father's name, the coming of His kingdom, the fulfilment of His will, protection against all evil, while both prayers are addressed to God as Father and are directed to bringing about the unity of the Christian family in the love of God.

In S. Luke's Gospel we find, attached to the Our Father, certain instructions on the general subject of prayer (xi, 5-13; cp. Matt. vii, 7-11). Taking their everyday experience as a starting-point Jesus showed His disciples how, even in the natural order, a persistent supplication has the power to touch the hearts of men. Thus a man is aroused in the middle of the night. Some one is calling to him through the closed door. 'Friend, lend me three loaves, because a friend of mine is come off his journey to me, and I have not what to set before him.' The man excuses himself; his house is shut up, everybody is in bed. But still the other persists in his request and, to get rid of him, is given what he asks. 'And,' our Blessed Lord continues, 'I say to you: Ask, and it shall be given you: seek, and you shall find: knock, and it shall be opened to you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.' And then, to make His meaning clearer, Christ makes use of another example, '... which of you, if he ask his father bread, will he give him a stone? Or a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he reach him a scorpion? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father from heaven give the good Spirit to them that ask Him?'

Men are wicked and avaricious,<sup>2</sup> yet who among them,

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Chase, p. 111, and *infra* in this volume, chap. vi, § vi.

<sup>2</sup> We may notice here how once again Jesus unobtrusively but quite definitely separates Himself from other men, taking an isolated position among the human race. 'You who are evil...' On this perversity of mankind, cp. Matt. vi, 23.

who happens to be a father, will greet his own son with mocking and derision, giving him useless or harmful objects instead of the good things for which he asks, which his spurious gifts may more or less resemble in a superficial way?<sup>1</sup> Surely Almighty God will not be less beneficent or prudent, where His own children are concerned. Our Lord's assurances on this point are guaranteed to us both by His own all-sufficient word and by the good traits found even in a perverse humanity, and revealing something of the supreme goodness to our minds<sup>2</sup>; yet through our Lord's death it all becomes still more secure. 'He that spared not even His own Son but delivered Him up for us all, how hath He not also, with Him, given us all things?' (Rom. viii, 32).

### VI. *The Parables of Mercy.*

(Luke xv, 1, 2): 'Now the publicans and sinners drew near unto him to hear him. And the Pharisees and the scribes murmured, saying: This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them.'

These two verses are S. Luke's only introduction to the three parables that immediately follow, and we have no information as to where and when they were spoken by Christ. All we are told, and all we need to know, is the occasion of their utterance by our Lord, and the purpose He had in view. Surrounded by relentless critics, who were reproaching Him for His condescension to sinners, He counters their rebukes by showing them something of the mercy of God. Earlier in His Ministry He had repelled such criticisms by quoting the prophet's words: 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice,' but here His reply has still greater appeal, enshrined as it is in parables which come straight from our Lord's own heart:

'And He spoke to them this parable, saying: What man of you that hath an hundred sheep, and if he shall lose one of them, doth he not leave the ninety-nine in the desert, and go after that which was lost until he find it? And when he hath found it, lay it upon his shoulders,

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Matt. iv, 3: '... Command that these stones be made bread.'

<sup>2</sup> We find a similar line of argument in the parable of the unjust judge (Luke xviii, 2-8), who fearing neither God nor man, none the less is overcome by the entreaties of a widow to whom he does justice in order to rid himself of her importunity. 'And will not God revenge His elect who cry to Him day and night? ... I say to you that He will quickly revenge them.'

rejoicing? And coming home call together his friends and neighbours, saying to them: Rejoice with me, because I have found my sheep that was lost? I say to you that even so there shall be joy in heaven upon one sinner that doth penance, more than upon ninety-nine just who need not penance.' (Luke xv, 3-7.)

This parable is recorded by Matthew (xviii, 12-14), in the course of our Lord's teaching on scandal: '... it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.' In this case the lesson follows more immediately upon the story; and the meaning of the parable is clearer at first sight. Our Redeemer was speaking of one of the facts of daily life. In the wide tracts of Judean country where sheep are allowed to roam at large, it is not unusual for one here and there to go astray, and, if not recovered by the shepherd, the unfortunate wanderer must be given up for lost, since it has no sense of direction and no strength adequate to self-defence. But the shepherd hastens to search for it, driven not only by the desire to recover his own property, but by pity as well. He finds it, lays it on his shoulders and brings it back in safety—a touching picture indeed and one ever cherished by the piety of the Christian world; for example, it inspired the favourite representation of our Lord in the art of the catacombs. We meet here once again, the Good Shepherd as He revealed Himself in the Temple at the Feast of Tabernacles. There He appeared in the setting of the security and peace of daily life, calling His sheep, leading them to and from the pastures; but also showing Himself, in times of peril, ready to endanger His life for them. Here, on the other hand, we see Him with the same whole-hearted devotion, pursuing them when they wander and bringing them back to the fold.

Then come the rejoicings; and here our Lord avails Himself of the exuberant character of Oriental manners in describing the gathering of friends and neighbours to share in the shepherd's own joy, the whole forming a faint picture of the joys of heaven. Conformably to Jewish use, Almighty God is described here—as in Matthew—only by a reverent figure of speech: '... it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven'; and again, '... there shall be joy in heaven.' But in spite of this restraint in language we feel here the heart of God, very close to men.

‘Or what woman having ten groats, if she lose one groat, doth not light a candle and sweep the house and seek diligently until she find it? And when she hath found it call together her friends and neighbours, saying : Rejoice with me, because I have found the groat which I had lost. So I say to you, there shall be joy before the angels of God upon one sinner doing penance.’ (Luke xv, 8-10.)

The charming simplicity of this parable—which is only found in S. Luke—has itself been a cause of offence to some Biblical scholars. Thus Reuss (491) thinks that no one would be as interested in a small coin as in a sheep, and that the poor woman in the story is too lowly a personage to stand here for none other than God Himself. Wright tries to find some solution to this ‘difficulty’ by supposing that the ten coins formed a personal ornament which had somehow got lost. This is to go out of one’s way to explain teaching which our Lord meant to put within the reach of all. No doubt a groat is a small matter, perhaps only a penny in value, but it represented the wages of a hard day’s work. And in a time and country when money was none too plentiful, a woman possessed of ten groats would not lose one of them with a light heart. She knows well enough that it has not been lost outside, for she was very careful to bring her money home, but the room is dark, it is only through the door that any light can get in, and in the nooks and corners where everything is heaped together it is no easy matter to find so small a coin. She lights the lamp, sweeps in all the corners and looks everywhere, retrieves her lost coin and comes to the door to show it to her neighbours, and, laughing for joy, ‘Look,’ she says, ‘I have found it again.’

So do the angels rejoice over the conversion of a single sinner to God. Such is our Lord’s own application of the parable, and a very moving one it is, all the more so, since it is inspired by so simple a scene. We cannot help feeling that to our Blessed Lord heaven and earth are in communion with each other ; that earth’s lowliest joys, and the most sublime delights of heaven, are felt each as truly as the other and as simply shared. The thought here is a little different from that of the preceding parable, for while the lost sheep itself called forth our pity, the same cannot be said of the lost

groat. But it is easy to understand that the most insignificant of sinners, if lost, leaves a void in the treasury of heaven, and that when this void is filled again, all heaven is rejoicing.

‘ And He said : A certain man had two sons. And the younger of them said to his father : Father, give me the portion of substance that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his substance. And not many days after, the younger son, gathering all together went abroad into a far country : and there wasted his substance, living riotously. And after he had spent all, there came a mighty famine in that country : and he began to be in want. And he went and cleaved to one of the citizens of that country. And he sent him into his farm to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks the swine did eat : and no man gave unto him. And returning to himself, he said : How many hired servants in my father’s house abound with bread, and I here perish with hunger ! I will arise and will go to my father, and say to him : Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee. I am not worthy to be called thy son : make me as one of thy hired servants. And rising up, he came to his father. And when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him and was moved with compassion, and running to him fell upon his neck and kissed him. And the son said to him : Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee : I am not now worthy to be called thy son. And the father said to his servants : Bring forth quickly the first robe and put it on him : and put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet. And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it : and let us eat and make merry : because this my son was dead and is come to life again, was lost and is found. And they began to make merry.’ (Luke xv, 11-24.)

In the whole preaching of the Gospel there is no more moving passage than this, nor one more familiar to every Christian soul. Every detail of the story is graven on all our memories, as well as the moral lessons which have been drawn from it—lessons no doubt legitimate in themselves. None the less, if we wish to get down to our Lord’s teaching in itself, we must free it from the interpretations to which Christian piety has given birth. As a matter of fact, like the other parables of our Lord, this story must not be treated as an

allegory, every detail of which has its own symbolic value, and must have its proper place in the interpretation as a whole ; the 'first robe,' for example, representing baptismal innocence, the ring the Holy Ghost, and the feast the Eucharist. All such applications may give rise to useful thoughts, but they are not directly implied by the Gospel itself. The picture drawn here, like that in the two preceding parables, brings before us the thought of God's mercy ; but here the impression is more obvious and more expressive. God's pity and love for sinners appear even more clearly under the figure of a father's relations with his wandering son, than under that of the shepherd and his sheep or of the woman and her lost groat.

Some pen-pictures in the Old Testament have already given glimpses of this mercy ; as, for example :

'For their mother [i.e. of the Israelites] hath committed fornication, she that conceived them is covered with shame. For she said : I will go after my lovers that give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, my oil and my drink. Wherefore behold I will hedge up thy way with thorns and I will stop it up with a wall : and she shall not find her paths. And she shall follow after her lovers and shall not overtake them and she shall seek them and shall not find. And she shall say : I will go and return to my first husband, because it was better with me then than now.' (Osee ii, 5-7.)

Plainly in this story of infidelity, followed by repentance, we have the same theme of the Prodigal Son under a different form—a soul urged to action by present misfortune and the thought of former peace. But the picture drawn in the Gospels stands out in higher relief ; especially is the attitude of Almighty God to the sinner painted with greater depth. In Osee, Jehovah is represented as stopping the path of the faithless spouse so that she may not regain her lovers, while, on the contrary, the father of the Prodigal Son makes over to him his part of the inheritance. So Almighty God may give over the sinner to the desire of his heart (Rom. i, 24-28), knowing that he will exhaust himself in vain in his futile quest and that he will turn again if, indeed, he be of a sincere and upright heart.

In Jewish law, after the death of a farmer, the inheritance was divided among the sons, the eldest receiving a double

portion with the obligation of providing for his mother and unmarried sisters. Before death, the father of a family could dispose freely of his property and even alienate it altogether in favour of strangers. Thus the younger son could not assert any rights in the matter. He had only hopes, and was anxious to see them fulfilled. He found the atmosphere of the home oppressive with the constant presence of his elder brother and even of the father himself. So the father gave him what he asked and the young man went his way. But soon all his wealth was dissipated in debauchery ; and a famine came upon the country in which he was sojourning. The prodigal entered the services of a landowner of the country, who sent him to look after the swine—the last resource, in the way of occupation, for a Jew. He is unpaid and underfed, and he even began to long for the food of the very animals themselves. There is a proverb of the Rabbis recorded in the Midrash on Leviticus<sup>1</sup> to the effect that ‘when Israel is driven to feed on carob-pods she will repent.’ And if this seems to represent the lowest depths of desolation, the prodigal had fallen yet lower, since he is refused even the wretched provender with which he might at least have kept his stomach filled. None of his fellow-swineherds thought of succouring this stranger. It was known that he had ruined himself by dissipation, and now he was dying of hunger. That was only justice, after all.

Then there came before him the vision of his father’s home, where the poorest of daily labourers was well fed and, indeed, generously treated in every respect. It was no longer possible to resume his former position there, but the lowest place in those dear surroundings would be better than the utter desolation of his present life. Such sentiments of the soul often find expression in the Psalms :

‘One thing I have asked of the Lord, this will I seek after : that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life. That I may see the delight of the Lord and may visit His temple’ (xxvi, 4). . . . ‘My soul hath thirsted after the strong living God. When shall I come and appear before the face of God ? My tears have been my bread day and night, whilst it is said to me daily : Where is thy God ? These things I remembered, and poured out my soul in me : for I shall go over into the place

<sup>1</sup> *Vayyikra Rabba*, 35, pp. 53b, 54a. Quoted by Edersheim, II, 261.



of the wonderful tabernacle, even to the house of God : with the voice of joy and praise ; the noise of one feasting. Why art thou sad, O my soul ? And why dost thou trouble me ? Hope in God, for I will still give praise to Him : the salvation of my countenance, and my God ' (xli, 3-7). ' . . . For better is one day in thy courts above thousands. I have chosen to be an abject in the house of my God, rather than to dwell in the tabernacles of sinners ' (lxxxiii, 11).

Urged on by such regret and remorse, the prodigal made up his mind. He returned fallen but repentant, and asked to be allowed to take the lowest place. He had thought over what he would say to his father : ' Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee. I am not worthy to be called thy son : make me as one of thy hired servants.'

And the father saw him still a long way off. He had wandered once more down the road taken by his son when he went away, and along which he felt sure he would one day return. Suddenly he caught sight of him further on : emaciated, dirty, ragged, unrecognizable by anyone else. But his father knew him and, running, reached him at last, threw himself on his neck and embraced him : ' Father,' says the lad, ' I have sinned against heaven and before thee. I am not worthy to be called thy son.' But the father will hear no more, his one desire being to see his son as he had known him before his fall. Let the servants make haste to bring the best robe, a ring and suitable foot-gear, and let them kill the fatted calf and prepare a feast, and let all be merry ; because this my son was dead and is come to life again, was lost and is found.

If the story had stopped here it would have been complete in itself, like the parables of the groat and the lost sheep. However, Jesus carried it further and, for Him, the second part of the parable is as important as what has gone before :

' Now his elder son was in the field : and when he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. And he said to him : Thy brother is come, and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe. And he was angry and would not go in. His father therefore coming out began to entreat him. And he answering, said to his father : Behold, for so many

years do I serve thee and I have never transgressed thy commandment : and yet thou hast never given me a kid to make merry with my friends. But as soon as this thy son is come, who hath devoured his substance with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf. But he said to him : Son, thou art always with me ; and all I have is thine. But it was fit that we should make merry and be glad : for this thy brother was dead and is come to life again ; he was lost, and is found.' (Luke, xv, 25-32.)

This fresh picture betrays all the delicacy of touch of the first. The servant who answered the elder brother's query was indifferent, and trite enough in his reply : ' Thy brother has returned in good health.' That is all he saw in the prodigal's return. But the elder brother had all the pride of his stainless life and long service, never as yet openly acknowledged by his father ; he was indignant at such compassion being shown to the prodigal ; he was not going to call the prodigal ' Brother,' just as he was determined not to say ' Father ' any more. The father's condescension and tact are admirable. Going out himself to his son, he begged him to come in, and replied gently and tenderly to his reproaches : ' Son, thou art always with me ; and all I have is thine.'

And there the story ends, although we should like to know if the elder brother allowed himself to be won over, and if the younger one persevered. But of this our Lord says nothing : it was a problem for the parties themselves to work out in their own lives.

Many varying interpretations of this parable have been proposed. The following questions were asked of S. Jerome by Pope S. Damasus :<sup>1</sup> ' Who is this father who divides his property between his two sons ? Who are the two sons ? Who is the elder son, who the younger ? In what sense has the younger son squandered his patrimony among harlots ? . . . Who is meant by the elder brother, and why is he so indignant with the reception accorded to the younger when he hears of it on his return from the fields ? . . .' And Damasus adds that he is familiar with the various interpretations that have been proposed. Some, he says, see in the prodigal son the Gentile races, and in the elder brother the Jews ; but then, how can we explain the fact that the elder brother has never transgressed the paternal command ?

<sup>1</sup> Jerome, *Epist.* xxi, P.L., XXII, 379.

Again, others take the prodigal to represent the sinner and the elder brother the just ; but in that case it seems unlikely that such jealousy should have arisen.

In reply S. Jerome starts from S. Luke's own introduction to this section, and this is really the best method. We see there that all these three parables—the Lost Sheep, the Groats, and the Prodigal Son—were called forth by the reproaches of the Pharisees, who were shocked at our Lord's relations and those of His disciples with publicans and sinners. Consequently, we must take the opposing groups as standing respectively for the two sons of the parable. No doubt, at the present day, we may leave the historical circumstances out of account, making the rough division into the just and sinners a sufficient foundation on which to put the moral lesson that our Lord meant to teach, but if we are anxious to appreciate the delicate shades of meaning in our Lord's thought here, we must take into account the situation as He had it before Him, and those who actually represented to Him the just and the sinners—namely the Pharisees on the one hand and the publicans on the other. Then it becomes clear that the lesson here is the same as that of the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican ; except for the great indulgence with which the Pharisee is treated. 'For so many years do I serve Thee and I have never transgressed Thy commandment.' And our Lord does not rebuke or correct this lofty attitude ; He only tries to make him realize the infinite reward already attending such a life, ill requited as the Pharisee deems it to be : ' . . . Thou art always with me,' words that recall those by which Israel is made by the Psalmist to address Jehovah Himself :

' . . . I am always with Thee. Thou hast held me by my right hand : and by Thy will Thou hast conducted me : and with Thy glory Thou hast received me. For what have I in heaven ? And besides Thee what do I desire upon earth ? For Thee my flesh and my heart hath fainted away. Thou art the God of my heart, and the God that is my portion for ever.' (Ps. lxxii, 23-26.)

Here there is painted the lot of the true Israelite, and if once its glory has struck him, there will be no place for envy of anyone else. But, alas ! he has ceased to be conscious of it : his is a mind narrowed down to the daily task, at once his duty and his pride. He is full of complaint because no

fatted calf has been killed for him, and he overlooks the fact that all God's good things are his, at his request. On the last day of His life Christ would say to His Father : ' All My things are Thine, and Thine are Mine ' (John xvii, 9). A common ownership, resting, no doubt, on titles of a unique and incommunicable kind ; yet in a lesser degree every just man in union with the Father, and incorporated with this true Elder Brother, can say with confidence : ' All my things are Thine, and Thine are mine.'

But for that, as S. Paul tells his faithful (Phil. ii, 5), we must share our Lord's attitude to others, ' each one not considering the things that are his own, but those that are other men's.' We must see nothing amiss in the Father's mercy for the Prodigal, and, to quote another of our Lord's parables, our ' eye must not be evil, because God is good.'

In hearts where Christ's spirit dwells no longer, the sinner has no longer any pardon to hope for, and the just becomes none other than a judge. It is Christianity's glory to have so exalted penance, that the just may, in a sense, be envious of the repentant sinner, but with a holy envy which only leads him to share his joy as he sits beside him at table, in his Father's house.

In order to finish our survey of Christ's teaching on mercy and justice, we must compare the parable of the Prodigal Son with that of the Pharisee and Publican. This is recorded by S. Luke a little further on, but with no indication as to the circumstances under which it was uttered. The evangelist places it immediately after the parables of the Unjust Judge, and it does in fact complete our Lord's teaching on prayer, although it has a wider application than this.

' And to some who trusted in themselves as just and despised others, He spoke also this parable : Two men went up into the temple to pray : the one a Pharisee and the other a publican. The Pharisee standing, prayed thus with himself : O God, I give Thee thanks that I am not as the rest of men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, as also is this publican. I fast twice in a week : I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not so much as lift up his eyes towards heaven : but struck his breast, saying : O God, be

merciful to me a sinner. I say to you, this man went down into his house justified rather than the other : because everyone that exalteth himself shall be humbled : and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.' (Luke xviii, 9-14.)

Although the Pharisees put themselves forward as specialists in the practice of justice and all virtues, their life was often far enough from corresponding to their claims. Our Lord attacked these 'whited sepulchres,' which in spite of their fair exterior were full of interior corruption ; and S. Paul himself, a convert Pharisee, was no less severe. 'Thou therefore that teachest another, teachest not thyself ; thou that preachest that men should not steal, stealest. Thou that sayest men should not commit adultery, committest adultery . . .' (Rom. ii, 21 ff.).

But such hypocrisy was not the sole complaint that could be made against the Pharisees. Even if their professed righteousness were real, it was saturated with pride, and valueless in the sight of God.

This is the lesson that our Lord teaches here, treating it apart from all others, in order to set it in greater relief. The Pharisee painted here was faithful in observing every point of the law and of tradition, while the publican was truly a sinner, just as he represented himself to be ; only while the one is filled with self-complacency and is therefore rejected, the other implores the mercy of God, who consequently accedes to his prayer.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The good works of which the Pharisee boasted were not prescribed by the Law. Thus, as we have already pointed out, the only fast ordered by the Mosaic Law was that of the Day of Atonement ; the fast on Mondays and Thursdays was an act of self-imposed devotion practised by many Pharisees. Neither the tithe on all gains, nor that of the mint and cummin (Matt. xxiii, 23) was any longer of obligation ; and all these observances were included in the Pharisee's boast. To this, Rabbinical literature presents many parallels. Thus in *Berachoth*, 28b, we read : " ' I praise Thee, O Lord,' said a Rabbi, " that Thou hast put me among those seated in this house of instruction and not with those others (money-changers and shopkeepers) who are found in the public squares. I rise early in the morning as they do also ; but I, to study the words of Thy Law, and they to pursue the vanities of life. I work, and they, too ; but for my work I receive a reward, and they none. I run a course, and so do they ; but my goal is the life of the world to come, and theirs is the abyss." So also another writer (*Eruv*, 21b) : ' Lord of the World, judge me not like those who live in great towns (such as Rome), where reign impurity, perjury and theft.' Finally, we have this saying of R. Simeon ben Jochai (*Ber. Rabba*, XXXV, p. 64b) : ' If there are only two just men in the world, they are myself and my son ; and if there is one only, I am the one.' Quoted by Edersheim, II, 29.

Montefiore, himself a Jew, in commenting on this parable, writes : ' No parable in the Gospels is more characteristic than this. None reflects better an essential feature of the teaching of Jesus. A legal religion has its dangers . . . and what they are is inimitably hit off in this admirable story. It touches the spot ; it reveals the sore place. It is true.'<sup>1</sup>

The whole meaning of the parable is summed up in our Lord's brief words, which have penetrated to the depths of the conscience of the Christian world : ' Everyone that exalteth himself shall be humbled, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.'

### VII. *The Unjust Steward.* (Luke xvi, 1-9.)

Perhaps there has been no passage of the Gospels which has been the subject of so much literature, critical and expository, as this.<sup>2</sup> More than a hundred essays and monographs have dealt with the matter, and of these it is said the majority are not worth the effort of reading them. Many authors, disgusted by the dishonesty of the unjust steward, have asked how such a man came to be set before us as an example. We may recall Renan's sneer (*Les Evangiles*, p. 276) that ' in Christ's kingdom it pays better to make friends of the poor, even by unjust means, than to have been an upright steward,' a charge which, so far from being a product of modern scepticism, is as old as Julian the Apostate. On the other hand there have not been wanting authors ready to defend the unjust steward. Thus, Wright thinks that the debtors who had their accounts reduced by him were tenants who had been subject to extortion, like the victims of the rack-rents in Ireland ; and that, in reducing their rent, this official not only restored justice to the oppressed but did a service to his master, whose interest it could not be to exact from his tenant-farmers more than the soil would yield.

All this is ingenious enough, but does violence to the

<sup>1</sup> *Synoptic Gospels*, 1st ed., p. 1022. In the second edition (II, p. 556) this passage has been retouched, and the concluding admission expunged ; instead, the author is at pains to demonstrate the humility of the Pharisees.

<sup>2</sup> These interpretations are critically set forth in Ad. Rucker, *Ueber das Gleichnis vom ungerechten Verwalter* (*Biblische Studien*, XVII, 5), Freiburg, 1912. Cp. Fonck, 676 ff.

Gospel account ; it is quite clear that Jesus represents the steward as a dishonest man, but it is not for that that He praises him ; and if He sets him before us as an example, it is on account of his ability and resource. In their own sphere, and dealing with others like themselves, the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light. That is the lesson that our Lord wishes us to learn. The accompanying details have no independent value of their own, but are intended to make the lesson clearer and more easily grasped.<sup>1</sup> This particular steward was evidently not a slave ; since the master does not threaten to sell him, but only to drive him from his service. Probably, like most officials of the kind, he was a freedman. His vices were those commonly found in his line of life, at least in the East, where such abuses of trust are an everyday affair. His employer had not made a practice of keeping in close touch with the management of his property, but denunciation from other sources had opened his eyes. When sent for by his master, the steward does not attempt to justify himself. He knows that his management has been indefensible ; besides, he has by no means saved all that he has stolen from his employer, having dissipated most of it in pleasure-seeking, like the prodigal son. Neither work nor a beggar's life are possibilities to be entertained ; so he must make the best of his remaining days of power by creating potential friends bound by ties of obligation to himself.

Apparently, the property of which this official was the steward, like most Palestinian property of the period, consisted of fields of olive and wheat. Debts were paid in kind, namely corn and oil. It is thought that there is reference here to farm rents ; if so, the steward was doubly interested in reducing the account, since in this way not only did he render a service to the debtors, but at the same time covered up the traces of his own defalcations. The Galilean *bath*,

<sup>1</sup> We may recall, as a curiosity, the allegorical interpretation suggested by Theophilus of Antioch and recorded by S. Jerome in his letter to Algasia (*Epist.* 121, 6. P.L., XXII, 1020). 'The rich man is Almighty God ; His steward is S. Paul, to whom, at Gamaliel's feet, was entrusted the Law of God. When he began to scatter the Christians, being reproved by his master he exclaimed : "What shall I do ? I cannot dig. The Law has fallen to the ground ; I cannot beg, for that would make me the disciple of the Gentiles and of Ananias." Then calling the debtors of the Law he reduced their debt by teaching them salvation by Faith and for this he is praised by the Lord.' All this is a pious allegory in tune with the Gospel, but evidently not conveying its literal sense.

which would probably have been the measure used in the transactions here described, was the equivalent of about nine gallons, and since the nine hundred gallons, or so, of oil alluded to in the parable would have been worth about 250 francs,<sup>1</sup> the unjust steward would have offered each debtor a barrel of wine at a price of 125 francs.<sup>1</sup> Similarly one hundred *cor* of wheat being worth about 2,500 francs,<sup>1</sup> the agreed reduction of twenty *cor* would have come to 500 or 600 francs,<sup>1</sup> not large amounts in absolute value, but representing a great sum for the period concerned. The alteration of the receipts would not have been difficult if, as was probably the case, they were written on tablets of wax. Besides, no doubt this was not the steward's first transaction of this kind ; he was only doing for the tenants what he had done more than once on his own behalf. When his employer came to know all that had taken place, he could not help remarking on the capability of his former servant.

The application of this story is simple enough. The rascally steward had been prudent and resourceful, and the sons of light must possess these qualities in no less degree. The evil wealth of a passing world is theirs, but only for a short time. It will fail them soon, so let them use it to make friends who will receive them later on.

It has been asked, in this connection, how we are to know that the poor will be in heaven before us, to receive us there ? Must they always be the first to die ? This can only be a difficulty for those who forget the scene of the Last Judgment. 'I was hungry, and you gave me to eat' ; ' . . . as long as you did it to one of my least brethren, you did it to me.' In that last great day, Christ will await us surrounded by His own disciples and friends. It is they who will receive us into everlasting dwellings.

#### VIII. *Dives and Lazarus.* (Luke xvi, 19-30.)

The lesson that our Lord wished to teach us here finds its complement in a second parable recorded in the same chapter of S. Luke, a few verses later on. Here, too, some have tried to work out an allegorical interpretation, in which Lazarus stands for the Jewish people under the heel of

<sup>1</sup> See note 1, p. 384 of Vol. I, *supra*.



oppressors, while in Dives' five brethren some see the five Herods who succeeded Herod the Great, namely Archelaus, Philip, Antipas and the two Agrippas; others the High Priest Annas' five sons. As Godet very justly remarks: (p. 221) 'Jesus would never have descended to personalities of this kind.'<sup>1</sup>

In reality, as in the other parables, we have here a moral lesson in concrete form, of which by no means every detail has a symbolic value, this belonging only to the narrative as a whole. There has been considerable discussion as to the correct interpretation here. Those who would accuse S. Luke of Ebionitism have made use of this parable, especially of verse 25<sup>2</sup>; where they claim to find a kind of law of retaliation by which those who are the favourites of fortune in this life are to be tormented hereafter, while the unhappy here will receive their consolation above. Such a law of the reversal of parts is of a crude simplicity, which in no way corresponds to our Lord's teaching here or anywhere else. When Dives asks that his five brothers may be warned, he does not mean that they must necessarily adopt the rôle of Lazarus, but do penance and hear Moses and the Prophets.

On the other hand, many scholars consider that Dives was being punished for his hard-hearted treatment of Lazarus—a not unnatural interpretation, but one in no way required by the text. Against it Fr. Buzy has accumulated objections that are far from lacking in force: '(Dives),' he says, 'only maintained his position and lived as other rich men did. In any case there is not a word in this passage about his alleged inhumanity to the poor. Rather it is the contrary that is implied in the picture of the poor man at Dives' gate, where evidently he was accustomed to lie and where he picked up the bare necessities of life. . . . In Palestine these beggars in tatters and covered with ulcers are legion, and are content if they can feel sure of a sufficient pittance from the rich to keep them from dying of want. Moreover, the rich man's request to Abraham (24) would be very difficult to explain if he had treated Lazarus with inhumanity. . . . Finally, I cannot help thinking that, if his conscience smote him on this point, he would have invoked all the saints of

<sup>1</sup> Loisy (p. 177, n.) sees in the five brethren the five books of the Law. Of course, flights of fancy of this kind can be pursued indefinitely.

<sup>2</sup> ' . . . thou didst receive good things in thy lifetime, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and thou art tormented.'

Paradise before having recourse to the prayer of his dependent of past days. . . .<sup>1</sup>

And Fr. Buzy concludes : ' If I am not mistaken, the cumulative effect of these reasons is to establish a clear proof of the point in question ; namely that the rich man is to be exonerated from any charge of inhumanity. No mention is made in the sacred text of the causes either of his damnation or of the salvation of Lazarus. . . . The parable does not deduce a general law from a constantly observed fact ; it only states a possibility which might become a reality at any time. Not only does the possession of this world's goods afford no guarantee of attainment to those of the world to come, but it is possible to be cast from the very heart of riches into the fires of hell. Not only is there nothing final about material unhappiness, but it may well be that the poor may exchange their pitiable condition for the unspeakable glories of heavenly bliss.'<sup>2</sup>

No doubt we have here a judicious interpretation, rather excessively so, in fact ; for, understood in this way, the parable contains practically no teaching at all. It would seem that the position in which S. Luke places it in his Gospel suggests a more probable explanation. The Unjust Steward knew how to secure his future, while Dives in his lack of foresight never gives the matter a thought, and in the great day finds himself deprived of all. It is from this culpable neglect that our Lord wishes to preserve us ; and so He shows us a picture, not of a man specially lacking in pity or debauched or cruel, but simply with no thought but to enjoy his present fortune, only to find that he has lost everything in the end. He, too, could have made friends who would have received him into everlasting dwellings, but he never gave it a thought. He let the poor beggar feed on the crumbs that fell from his table, but without doing anything else for him ; and after death he found himself in hell, while the beggar was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom.

So the lesson of the parable is ' the necessity of thinking in good time of the life beyond the grave, while we are still surrounded by earthly goods. The rich man is the only figure that really matters ; Lazarus is only part of the framework . . . and of no more importance in the picture than his five brothers. As for Dives, he had been well grounded as

<sup>1</sup> R.B., 1918, p. 194.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 196.

to the necessity of keeping the future in mind. After all, he had Moses and the prophets as his teachers.<sup>1</sup>

All the same, it must be admitted that it was not without reason that our Lord assigned Lazarus to Abraham's bosom. Certainly his poverty was not in itself enough to save him, and the duty of hearing Moses and the prophets, and of doing penance, was incumbent upon him, as much as upon anyone else ; but his circumstances made such penance easier by freeing him from the cares and snares of wealth.

Let us compare the above parable with the following one, somewhat shorter, and related by S. Luke a little earlier in his Gospel :

‘ And He spoke a similitude to them, saying : The land of a certain rich man brought forth plenty of fruits. And he thought within himself, saying : What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits ? And he said : This will I do : I will pull down my barns, and will build greater : and into them will I gather all things that are grown to me, and my goods. And I will say to my soul : Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years, take thy rest, eat, drink, make good cheer. But God said to him : Thou fool, this night do they require thy soul of thee : and whose shall those things be which thou hast provided ? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God.’ (xii, 16-21.)

The meaning of this parable is so plain that comment is needless. In other cases it is sometimes difficult to separate the main lesson from the subsidiary details ; but here our Lord has done this for us, leaving the rich man alone in the picture with Almighty God Himself ; who, however, only interferes suddenly, at the end. The rich man's one thought is to get as much enjoyment out of life as possible, and his sole problem, as he views his superabundant harvest, is to find barn-room and adequate security for this property of his, that he may enjoy it to the full. And the problem was easily solved. The existing barns were to be pulled down and larger ones built, thus securing to him the enjoyment of his wealth for many years to come. All he had to do was to sit at table and make good cheer. But at that

<sup>1</sup> Reuss, p. 505.

moment Almighty God interposed: 'This night they will require thy soul of thee.'

In view of all the self-centred scheming, so tragically frustrated, of the principal characters of these parables, the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount seems to gain added force, and indeed it is in this passage (xii, 22 ff.) that many of its sayings are quoted by S. Luke.

'Be not solicitous for your life, what you shall eat; nor for your body, what you shall put on. . . . Seek not what you shall eat, or what you shall drink: and be not lifted up on high. For all these things do the nations of the world seek. But your Father knoweth that you have need of these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His justice; and all these things shall be added unto you. Fear not, little flock, for it hath pleased your Father to give you a kingdom. Sell what you possess and give alms. Make to yourselves bags which grow not old, a treasure in heaven which faileth not: where no thief approacheth, nor moth corrupteth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.' (Luke xii, 22, 29-34.)

We have already (*supra*, Vol. I, p. 136 ff.) compared these sayings of our Lord with those recorded by S. Matthew, noting that the difference between them lies in the fact that, while in S. Matthew we find Jesus recommending interior dispositions such as detachment from riches, in S. Luke He goes still further, and demands an effective renunciation of worldly cares. And at this stage of our Saviour's ministry we can understand very well that it should be so. The 'little flock' before Him is no longer the crowd that pressed around Him on the lake-side of Galilee, following Him for hours, or even days, and then returning to the occupations of daily life. No, it is a band of definitely-attached disciples—Apostles, too, who have left all for Him, and who are His companions on the journeys through the length and breadth of Judea, or who themselves carry on the work of preaching the Gospel, as they pass from town to town. The kingdom of heaven is theirs, but they must leave themselves in their heavenly Father's hands, so far as the cares of life are concerned. Yet once more we notice, as on several previous occasions, the change that has come over the evangelical

ministry of our Blessed Lord : no longer directed to the general mass of the people it is now concentrated on the 'little flock' of definite disciples, while, at the same time, it reveals more exacting claims and requires a higher standard of perfection than before. This is particularly evident in the episode of the rich young man.

### *IX. The Rich Young Man.*

This incident belongs to the period that we are studying at the moment (of the journey into Judea), and is found in all three Synoptics, being recorded with especial detail in S. Mark (x, 17-31 ; cp. Matt. xix, 16-30 ; Luke xviii, 18-30). We know nothing of the young man beyond what the Gospels tell us, but their brief account is moving in the extreme. Faithful in his fulfilment of the Law and sincerely desirous of eternal life, there is a simplicity and uprightness about the young man as he comes to ask counsel of Jesus, so that our Lord looked on him and loved him as he knelt before Him. But there was one thing wanting—and he had not the courage that it required—he must sell his property, give it to the poor, and follow Christ. In vain did our Lord promise him treasure in heaven—heaven was too far off and his wealth too near at hand ; he seemed to be caught in a tangle of thorns which recalls the parables of the lake. And so, when he heard our Lord's demands a gloom came over him, he lost courage and went away. After all, how long would he enjoy his wealth ? In the uncertain state of the country, how long would the Romans leave him the free disposal of his property ? Of all this he could know nothing, but to one of weak faith the greatest uncertainties seem more definite than the promises of Heaven.

And our Lord's glance, which had been fixed upon the young man, now rested on the disciples, while He remarked sadly : ' How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God ? ' When He sees their astonishment, He only repeats Himself in stronger terms. ' . . . how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God.' The Apostles' surprise, as depicted here, has been shared by all readers of the Gospel from the first ages of the Church ; and Clement of Alexandria, in his homily, ' What rich can be saved ? ' tries to meet the perplexities that so many have felt. Efforts have been made

to soften the asperities of the passage by interpretations less severe in character, in which the camel is taken to be a thread, or the needle's eye as one of the gates of Jerusalem. Such naïve devices are futile.<sup>1</sup> The text must stand as it is, with its teaching that salvation is impossible to man, but not to God. For the rest, although it is made here of the rich, this statement applies to us all. Everyone must deny himself and take up his cross and follow Christ, and for everyone the task is beyond his unaided strength. It is God alone that can accomplish it in us.<sup>2</sup>

Still the disciples' difficulty is not the thought, but the mode by which it is expressed. 'Who then,' they ask, 'can be saved?' Clement of Alexandria raises the point<sup>3</sup> as to what it was which caused this agitation on the disciples' part. They themselves had never been rich, and they had given up everything that they had. Yes, but at that moment they understood something of our Lord's imperious demand for utter surrender to Himself. Here was this young man, a faithful observer of the Law, sincerely desiring eternal life, but without the courage necessary to face the inevitable cost. Surely there is here something of the 'terrific seriousness' of the Christian life. And our Lord, in His reply, only affirmed the fact more strongly, while seeking to raise

<sup>1</sup> Hyperbolic expressions such as our Lord uses here were familiar to His hearers, and we find the same allusion to impossible feats in several Rabbinical texts. In these cases it is an elephant that is made to pass through the needle's eye. So *Berakot*, 55b; *Baba Metsia*, 38b; cp. Billerbeck, I, p. 238.

<sup>2</sup> Many, until they have assimilated this lesson as the supreme point of importance in our Lord's teaching here, have been disconcerted by His words to the young man: 'Why callest thou Me good? None is good but one, that is God.' These, however, have been excellently explained by Victor (Cramer, 376). 'As is often the case,' he says, 'our Lord only answers the thought in the mind of His questioner. So, for example, He tells the Samaritan woman: "You adore that which you know not: we adore that which we know. For salvation is of the Jews." In the same way to one who looks on Him only as a man He replies as a man, teaching him to wean himself from all flattery, to attach himself only to God, seeing the source of all goodness in Him.'

Glover (*The Jesus of History*, p. 14), writing of the tone of restraint always characteristic of the Gospels, recalls this incident: 'Why callest thou Me good? So it is recorded that Jesus once answered a compliment; and it looks as if the mood had passed over to His intimates, and from them to their friends who wrote the Gospels. He meant too much for them to seek the facile relief of praise. The words of praise die away, yes, and the words of affection, too: and their silence and self-restraint are in themselves evidence of their truth, and more winning than words could have been.'

<sup>3</sup> P.G., IX, 624-625.

our hopes by the thought of Divine help. 'With men it is impossible, but not with God. For all things are possible with God.'

Then Peter, recovering himself, recounted with some pride the sacrifices that all present had made: 'Behold, we have left all things and have followed Thee.' And Jesus replied with a promise of reward, taking care, at the same time, to widen the perspective, in order to show the disciples that they would not be the only ones to give up everything for Him. His words, together with this whole incident of the rich young man, have embarrassed the scholars of the Protestant world. Thus Godet (ii, 252) writes: 'The act that forms the true condition of entry into the kingdom of heaven is expressed by the last two words of our Lord to the young man, in which the whole teaching of the passage is summed up: "Follow Me." The way in which Jesus is to be followed changes with changing times. In those days, for anyone to adhere to Christ interiorly involved an outward following of Him, and consequently the abandonment of the disciple's earthly estate. On the other hand, to-day when our Lord's bodily presence is no longer here, the spiritual condition alone remains, but with all the moral results which flow from relationship with Him, according to the character and position of each.'

But at all periods of her history the Catholic Church has understood these words far otherwise. S. Paul, like S. Peter, took them in the most literal sense, and after the Apostles, their own disciples carried on their mode of life. We need only recall Eusebius' admirable description of the life of the evangelists of the sub-Apostolic age (*supra*, p. 48, note 1).

As for the reward promised by Christ, it will be realized on two different levels; in this life a hundredfold—houses, brethren, mothers, children, fields,<sup>1</sup> with persecutions; the last element sufficing to show that there is no question

<sup>1</sup> The Millenarians pictured an earthly paradise where the elect would receive an hundredfold the material goods they had forsaken for Christ. Such speculations are refuted by S. Jerome in his commentary on S. Matthew, where he asserts that spiritual goods are worth a hundred times more than material ones. This is, of course, true enough, but, none the less, these material goods *are* promised to the faithful in all their concrete reality—'houses, brethren, sisters, mothers, children, fields.' Fr. Lagrange (*S. Marc*, p. 277) thinks we may take 'houses, brethren,' etc., literally, but understanding them to refer to a religious fraternity of the kind that existed in the early days of the Christian Church; this is the interpretation of all modern scholars, Catholic and independent alike.' I

of an earthly paradise here. But in the background and in the world to come the reward is eternal life. It is then that the great reversal of parts so often foretold in the Gospels will be accomplished in the sight of all, when the first shall become the last, and the last shall pass into the front rank.

cannot think that this is a sufficient explanation of the passage in question : the religious fraternity at Jerusalem, together with the conditions of life that it presupposed, only lasted a few years. Christ's promises are never out of date ; besides, we cannot restrict their application to the common sharing of goods that is a feature of the religious life.

We shall understand our Lord's promise better if we recall the conditions of His service, in which we lose our life in order to find it. And so it is with all worldly goods ; if we amass them eagerly, we become their slave ; if we remain detached from them, we are their masters instead. And in this way, not only do we win liberty for ourselves, but at the same time we acquire that religious intuition which enables us to discover in created things the presence and action of God. Hence the humblest thing can bring a joy to the soul that no miser can ever hope to possess. Having nothing, we possess all things. *Tamquam nihil habentes, et omnia possidentes.* Cp. *Rech. de Sc. Relig.*, 1930, pp. 42-4 ; S. John of the Cross, *The Ascent of Mount Carmel*, III, ii, ch. 25.



## CHAPTER III

### THE FEAST OF DEDICATION. THE SOJOURN IN PEREA

#### *I. The Feast of Dedication.*

IN the last portions of S. John's narrative that we have examined, we saw Jesus at Jerusalem, during the Feast of Tabernacles. Since then, two or three months have passed by, and winter has come, bringing with it the Feast of Dedication.

We find an account of the origin of this feast in the First Book of Machabees (iv, 59), referring to the period immediately after the Purification of the Temple by Judas Machabees himself :

‘ And Judas and his brethren and all the church of Israel decreed, that the day of the dedication of the altar should be kept in its season from year to year, for eight days from the five and twentieth day of the month of Casleu, with joy and gladness.’

Josephus writes in the same sense (A.J., xii, vii, 7) :

‘ The celebrations of Judas and his fellow-citizens, in honour of the re-establishment of the sacrifices in the Temple, lasted for eight days. No kind of jubilation was omitted. He entertained his fellow-countrymen with costly and splendid sacrifices and caused to be sung hymns and psalms designed at the same time to exalt the glory of God and to rejoice the people. So happy were they to resume their customs and to recover their liberty of worship after so long a time and in such an unexpected way, that they enacted a law by which their descendants were bound every year, for eight days, to celebrate the restoration of the Temple. And ever since, up to the present day, we keep this feast, which we call the feast of lights, which name, I imagine, was given to it because this freedom had shone upon us in so unexpected a way.’

In origin this feast resembled the Feast of Tabernacles (2 Mach. x, 6-7) : ‘ And they kept eight days with joy, after

the manner of the feast of tabernacles, remembering that not long before they had kept the feast of tabernacles when they were in the mountains and in dens like wild beasts. Therefore they now carried boughs and green branches and palms for Him that had given them good success in cleansing His place.' But before long the two feasts began to diverge in character: that of the Dedication (Chanukhah) was the Feast of Lights; the Temple and all buildings of special importance being illuminated.<sup>1</sup> As at the Feast of Tabernacles, the psalm of the Hallel (Psalms 113-118) were sung to the accompaniment of flutes, the Levites intoning the first verse which was repeated by the people, who after each succeeding verse responded Hallelu Jah, i.e. Praise the Lord.

This feast, although essentially religious, was more national in character than other feasts, since it commemorated the purification of the Temple, defiled first by the Assyrians and then by the Greeks, and at the same time the deliverance of Israel itself. And now into the midst of the illuminations and joyful tumult came our Lord. It was in December, and the weather was cold.<sup>2</sup> Jesus stood under Solomon's Gate, destined later to be the place of meeting of the first Christians and in a sense the first Christian Church (Acts iii, 11; v, 12).<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A letter from the Jews of Jerusalem, recorded in the Second Book of the Machabees, gives the following explanation of the origin of these illuminations: 'For when our fathers were led into Persia, the priests that then were worshippers of God took privately the fire from the altar and hid it in a valley where there was a deep pit without water: and there they kept it safe so that the place was unknown to all men. But when many years had passed and it pleased God that Nehemias should be sent by the king of Persia, he sent some of the posterity of those priests that had hid it, to seek for the fire: and as they told us, they found no fire but thick water. Then he bade them draw it up and bring it to him: and the priest Nehemias commanded the sacrifices that were laid on to be sprinkled with the same water, both the wood and the things that were laid upon it. And when this was done and the time came that the sun shone out, which before was in a cloud, there was a great fire kindled, so that all wondered' (2 Mach. i, 19-22). Later on the following legend found its way into the Talmud: 'When the Hasmonean priests re-entered the Temple defiled by the Greeks they found only a phial of consecrated oil, still carrying its seal. It contained scarcely one day's supply and yet lasted for eight days. *Meg. Taan.*, 9. Billerbeck, II, pp. 539 ff. *Jewish Encyclopædia*, VI, 224a.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. 1 Esdras x, 9: '... in the ninth month, the twentieth day of the month... all the people sat in the street of the house of God, trembling, because of the sin and the rain.'

<sup>3</sup> Fouard (II, 127, n. 1) writes: 'The name of Solomon was given to this gate because it was constructed out of the débris of the ancient temple, A. J., XX, ix, 7.' This passage from Josephus has been incorrectly understood. This is how it runs: 'At that time the temple had been

S. Cyril of Alexandria, in commenting on this passage of S. John, suggests that if our Lord were in Jerusalem at this time, it was not to take part in a Jewish feast, but only because He would have an opportunity of preaching to the people gathered there. (P.G., LXXIV, 16.) Such an interpretation is natural enough in a fifth-century author to whom all Jewish solemnities are abominations. But in our Lord's time it was not so. 'Salvation is of the Jews.' Our Lord mingled with the people at their prayers and shared both them and the prevailing joy. But for Him it was no longer a peaceful celebration; already He was surrounded by enemies and spies.

'The Jews therefore came round about Him, and said to Him: How long dost Thou hold our souls to suspense? If Thou be the Christ tell us plainly. Jesus answered them: I speak to you, and you believe not: the works that I do in the name of My Father, they give testimony of Me. But you do not believe: because you are not of My sheep. My sheep hear My voice: and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them life everlasting; and they shall not perish for ever, and no man shall pluck them out of My hand. That which My Father hath given Me is greater than all: and no one can snatch them out of the hand of My Father. I and the Father are one.' (John x, 24-30.)

We have here an echo of our Lord's instruction on the Feast of Tabernacles; there was the same teaching and it

finished (under Agrippa II) and the people seeing that the workers, who numbered more than 18,000, were unemployed . . . requested the king to rebuild the eastern gate. This was situated in the outer part of the Temple where it overlooked a deep valley. It had four hundred cubits of walls and was built of square stone of great whiteness, each stone being twenty cubits long and six high. The gate was the work of Solomon, who was the first to build the Temple as a whole. The king, reflecting that this gate especially would be easy to demolish and difficult to build, owing to the time and money required, refused the request that had been made to him, but did nothing to prevent the paving of the town with white stones' (A.J., XX, ix, 219-222).

It is evident from this passage that the gate in question was in no sense built out of the remains of the ancient temple; on the contrary, it was part of the ancient Temple itself, still standing, and was used by Agrippa II as a quarry from which to obtain stones for paving the town. No doubt it was this handsome work to which one of the Apostles admiringly drew the attention of our Lord. 'Master, behold what manner of stones and what buildings are here,' and Jesus replied: 'Seest thou all these great buildings. There shall not be left a stone upon a stone, that shall not be thrown down' (Mark xiii, 1-2; cp. A.J., XV, xi, 3).

was received in the same way. It is only the sheep of the Good Shepherd who hear His voice, and those who were about Him then were not His sheep. Their motive in surrounding Him was not at all that of the Galilean crowds of whom the disciples said (Mark v, 31) : 'Thou seest the multitude thronging Thee ; and sayest Thou who hath touched Me ?' Then it was the pressure of enthusiasm ; to-day the crowds are still about Him, but only that they may hinder His flight, and take Him captive. This was the sole purpose of their insistent questioning : they willed His destruction, and nothing else. As S. Chrysostom, with much insight, observes (LIX, 337) : 'When He teaches them by His discourses they ask Him : "What sign doest Thou that we may believe in Thee ?" When He brings before them the proof of His mighty works : "If Thou be the Christ," they say, "tell us plainly." The works cry aloud, but they want words ; and when they have words to instruct them, they vie with each other in asking for works.' So Jesus contented Himself with recalling His statements of heretofore, and the miracles by which He verified them ; merely adding that if they did not believe in Him they were not His sheep.

'And I give them life everlasting . . .' Even in speaking to His enemies whose only object in seeking Him was His destruction, our Lord has no thought but for their salvation, and, as always, He sets before their eyes the infinite and eternal reward that He gives to His own. The security that the Good Shepherd had lately promised under the figure of the sheepfold and the door, He now offers under a still more expressive image. He holds His sheep in His hands and none can snatch them away. Whoever feels the strong but tender grip of that all-powerful hand has no cause to fear either wolf or robber.

And then, suddenly, as if to give a more striking pledge of His omnipotence, Jesus reveals the great mystery that lies beneath : 'That which My Father hath given Me is greater than all. . . . I and the Father are ONE.' And if it be asked what is this thing greater than all others, the gift of the Father making Him *one thing* with Himself, the answer is that it is the Divine nature which He has from His Father and holds in common with Him. 'The Father,' says S. Augustine (1743), 'in begetting the Son gave Him to be God ; in begetting Him He gave Him to be eternal like

Himself ; in begetting Him He gave Him to be His equal. This is a thing greater than aught else.' And this great declaration of our Lord's is emphasized in the words that follow : ' No one can snatch them out of the hand of My Father. I and the Father are one.' Between the two Divine Persons, therefore, there is a community of power having its roots in a community of nature. Our Lord's statement is categorical and the Jews understand it well enough, although they reject it with loathing. ' The Jews,' remarks S. Augustine, ' understood what the Arians missed ; and if it aroused their anger it was because they saw that Christ could not say : " I and the Father are ONE," without affirming the equality of the Father and the Son.' But this very reaction is an index to their dispositions : they demanded a positive statement from Jesus ; and when they get it, it moves them to more frantic wrath.

It must be admitted, however, that the statement they received was not what they expected. They wanted to drive our Lord into a corner and compel Him to retract, or at least compromise Himself by His reply. It is a similar method to that adopted by the Sanhedrin on the last day of His life : ' If Thou be the Christ, tell us ' (Luke xxii, 67). Here they were counting especially upon the political aspirations which the title Messiah was calculated to evoke. If Jesus recognized them, they would denounce Him to the Romans ; if He discouraged them, by that very fact He would lose His authority with the crowds. Here we have already the plot that we are shortly to meet again when Christ is interrogated about the title of Son of David. But He would not follow them on to this ground, either at the time of His Passion or, still less at the moment under consideration. When He is pressed as to His title Messiah, He stresses its purely spiritual meaning. His kingdom is not of this world. Thus, in this discussion, He at once leads His hearers on to His own ground, preaching to them once more faith, eternal life, the Father, and His own union with Him. No doubt His enemies in their blindness will take His statements as blasphemies and will want to stone Him, just as later, at His Passion, they will shout blasphemies and call for His death. But if Jesus does not avoid danger, at least He dispels all misunderstanding. It is His will to die, that He may bear witness to Himself as a martyr to spiritual

truth, but not for having laid claim to royalty or roused the people to revolt.<sup>1</sup> So in the very struggle that was to end in His death, our Lord betrays the all-conquering assurance that gave Him His peculiar power over His enemies, a power affirmed most forcibly in verse 28 : ' . . . no man shall pluck them out of My hand.' We may see here an allusion to the man born blind who had recently been cast out of the synagogue for his belief in Christ ; and, more generally, to all those disciples, humble and feeble like sheep, whom Jesus holds safe in His hand, and from which no power can ever snatch them away.

'The Jews then took up stones to stone Him. Jesus answered them : Many good works I have shewed you from My Father : for which of those works do you stone Me ? The Jews answered Him : For a good work we stone Thee not, but for blasphemy : and because that Thou, being a man, makest Thyself God. Jesus answered them : Is it not written in your law : I said, you are gods ? If he called them gods, to whom the word of God was spoken ; and the scripture cannot be broken : Do you say of Him, whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world : Thou blasphemest ; because I said : I am the Son of God ? If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not. But if I do, though you will not believe Me, believe the works : that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father. They sought therefore to take Him : and He escaped out of their hands.' (John x, 31-39.)

<sup>1</sup> Compare Charue's explanation (*L'incrédulité des Juifs*) of our Lord's discourses at Jerusalem and especially of this one (p. 234) : 'These questions (about the Messiasship) were put explicitly by the Jews from, at latest, the last winter feast of Dedication. And our Lord did not shirk the issue. Although marked by discretion His reply left no possibility of doubt : He presented Himself as the Messias foretold by the Prophets. All the same, the fateful title has not yet been spoken. Rising quickly above the bare claims of Messiasship, His self-avowal goes straight to the point of the identity of nature between the Father and the Son.' And again on page 62 : 'During the last months, while allowing Himself to be proclaimed as the Messias, He personally maintained an attitude of reserve, even of mystery on the subject, until the affirmation of His divinity should have dissociated His work from all complicity with nationalist schemes at that time so much in the air.'

These remarks are just. Our Lord's efforts—especially as described by S. John—are directed towards leading His hearers to the very heart of the mystery, the Divine Sonship, rather than to the Messianic claims—a self-manifestation infinitely deeper and more spiritual, as well as free from the dangerous equivocations of the national Messianism of the time.

These few verses have puzzled a good many readers, for after the express declarations they have just been reading, they can scarcely avoid the impression that we have here a distinct weakening of the truth that has just been proclaimed. Before discussing the point let us reproduce one conclusion that has been formed from the facts : 'It is absolutely impossible,' remarks Godet (p. 204), 'to suppose that a later writer who was also the inventor of the Logos theory, could have imagined a line of argument such as we find in this small section of the Gospel record. How can we suppose that such a man could have attributed to Jesus a mode of reasoning that seems, on the face of it, to contradict all that He had yet affirmed about His own divinity? On the contrary, such a line of argument as we have here carries its historical character on its face, while, at the same time, it shows the clearest understanding of the Old Testament scriptures that we can conceive. Quite clearly the whole discourse can be attributed to none other than Jesus Himself.' And elsewhere he adds (p. 261) : 'Let us suppose that the evangelist himself had invented the whole line of argument that we find here. We cannot believe that he, claiming to be the author of the Logos theory, could not have resisted the temptation to put into our Lord's own mouth that favourite title by which he had called Him in the prologue to his work. It would have been a natural way of developing the argument. The Law gives the title of gods to those to whom the Divine Word is addressed. Surely, then, there could be no question of charging with blasphemy Him who was the Word itself, when He claimed the title of God? John did not yield to the temptation, or rather it did not exist for him, he who had no other object than to faithfully record his Master's words.'

These valuable reflections help to make the true position clear. We must not regard this particular conversation of our Lord's, any more than any other passage of the Gospels, as a systematic exposition of Christian doctrine, primarily and directly addressed to all generations of the Christian Church. No doubt Christ intended His words for us, but it is to His Jewish questioners that He was speaking in the first instance, repelled as they were by His exalted claims, and ready to stone Him in their indignation and disgust. But His hour had not yet come, and He had no desire just then to carry the struggle to the bitter end ; particularly He

did not wish to give up all hope of bringing to Him these weak souls blinded by the brilliant light of truth. On the other hand, He neither could nor would withdraw anything that He had said. His task was to parry the attack, and to try especially to make the truth more acceptable to them by presenting it under a different guise and in a softer light. Here there is an exact parallel with the discourse on the Bread of Life. There, too, Jesus was speaking to feeble souls, puzzled and shocked by His stupendous claims—His descent from Heaven, His promise to give His Flesh and Blood as food. Our Lord withdrew nothing of all this, but He did try to lead them to the truth by another way when He reminded them that ‘It is the spirit that quickeneth : the flesh profiteth nothing.’ If they would only follow that train of thought they would understand that Christ’s flesh is life-giving because it is united to, and the instrument of His Godhead. Similarly here, He shelved the main argument in order to deal with the objections that were being pressed at the moment. The Jews had in their minds the thought of Jehovah’s incommunicable majesty, of which our Blessed Lord’s claims seemed to them to be a blasphemous usurpation ; so He tries to show them how, even in their own scriptures, this majesty is to be seen resting on mere men, such as the judges of Israel, and how it is still more reasonable to accept a claim based on a Divine revelation, into further details of which, however, He did not propose to enter then.<sup>1</sup> To make it clear how great was the gulf between

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Lagrange, *S. Jean*, pp. 175 ff. ‘While the word “son” in Greek necessarily expresses the idea of sonship, natural or legal, in the Semitic languages the term “son of God” may stand for a vaguer relationship. Thus Israel was God’s son—even His only son—as was also the king as representing the chosen people of God. . . . The same was true of magistrates who were endowed with special gifts in virtue of their functions. It is on this last point that our Lord relies in trying to lead the Jews to a recognition of His true nature. All that was necessary was an easy transition of thought to the proper from the figurative sense of the word, which none the less implied a real participation in Divine gifts. Really, therefore, a passage such as this of John (x, 34 ff.), generally regarded as presenting considerable difficulty, throws much light on the whole question of our Lord’s Person. . . . These words of Jesus, as recorded by S. John, form a link between the Old Testament and His own teaching as to His nature and mission ; they involve the fundamental idea of the Gospel, as registered in the Synoptics and developed by S. Paul.’

This is the sense of S. Augustine’s comment : ‘Observe how the Lord dealt with these sluggish minds. He saw that they could not bear the full splendour of truth, and He tempered it to them by a screen.’ On the other hand S. Chrysostom rightly remarks : ‘The Jews, understanding that our Lord claimed equality with the Father, wanted to stone Him.



these 'gods' and Himself, He goes on to say that while to them the word of God had been spoken, He had received infinitely more than this : for He had been sanctified by the Father and sent into the world. This was the consecration by which the Father had dedicated Him to His work in the world. This was the thought running through our Lord's words in His great priestly prayer for His disciples on the last night of His life. 'Sanctify them in truth. Thy word is truth. As Thou hast sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for them do I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth.' These words were uttered only a few hours before the death of Christ, and the 'sanctification' of which He speaks is the supreme act of consecration by which He prepares for the final act of sacrifice He is about to make. And it would seem that it is in this sense that we are to understand the consecration by which the Father dedicates Him to His work and sent Him into the world.<sup>1</sup>

Having thus diverted His enemies' attack and put them in the way of a better understanding of His union with the Father, our Lord went on to point to His works as evidence of His Divine mission. However, here as elsewhere, the testimony of the works was only invoked as a last resource to convince those who otherwise refused to believe. 'Though you will not believe Me, believe the works.' Christ's own sheep, who know His voice, have no need of such witness (viii, 14) ; for them He is sufficient in Himself. But those who are slower, and duller in faith, have to be won over by the mighty deeds that He has wrought.

But in spite of all His efforts to convince them, the hostility of His enemies was in no way disarmed. They tried to seize Him, but He escaped out of their hands.

None the less He did nothing to correct their view of the matter, although if this were ill-founded He had only to put them right in some such words as these : "What is the meaning of this ? In all that I have said I never had any intention of claiming equality of power with the Father." As a matter of fact He did the precise contrary, confirming and deliberately strengthening their impression, and this notwithstanding the pitch of frenzy they had reached. Far from excusing Himself for having spoken amiss, He rebukes them for thinking less of Him than His claims demand. . . . All that He said in this connection amounts to this : If those whose dignity is theirs by favour can call themselves gods, surely He who is God by nature has the right to say so ?

<sup>1</sup> However, S. Augustine understands it to refer to His eternal generation : 'Sic sanctificavit, quomodo genuit, ut enim sanctus esset, gignendo ei dedit.'

‘ And He went again beyond the Jordan into that place where John was baptizing first : and there He abode. And many resorted to Him, and they said : John indeed did no sign : But all things whatsoever John said of this man were true. And many believed in him.’ (John x, 40-42.)

In this outline, brief but breathing the full spirit of peace, we find a momentary rest from the conflict in Jerusalem. The evangelist himself evidently felt the charm of the memories associated with the scene where he himself had followed S. John the Baptist and where, for the first time, he had attached himself to Christ. So he ends the story of our Lord’s ministry at the very place where it was begun. Among the people of the district of Perea the influence of the Sanhedrin was less strongly felt, while the memory of John the Baptist was a living thing. They liked to remember now all that he had said about this young Teacher whose words and deeds of wonder had aroused the whole of Judea. True, John himself had never performed any miracles ; but he had heralded Jesus, and all his prophecies had been fulfilled, and more. And so, from beyond the grave, the Precursor carried on his work, still leading to Christ those who had been already touched by his words.

The Synoptics give a longer account of this stay in Perea, which is rather lightly touched upon by S. John ; but before studying their account we may glance once more at the scenes we have just left. Frequently before, both in Galilee and at Jerusalem, the hostility of the Pharisees and indeed their murderous intent, had been clear enough ; but this was the first time that their designs had begun to take the precise form which we shall meet with in the story of the Passion itself. Then they will simply resume the tactics they had already begun, provoking Jesus to declare Himself the Messiah and then rejecting His claims as blasphemous in themselves. ‘ If Thou be the Christ, tell us plainly,’ they urge, and as soon as they have received the answer, cry : ‘ You have heard the blasphemy ; He is worthy of death.’ Confident as they were of victory, they could not but follow our Lord on to the ground chosen by Himself. We hear no more feigned pretence about the Sabbath or the Law ; no more political wrangling on the kingship of the Messias ;

there remained only the purely religious conflict between the Son of God affirming His claims, and those who rejected them in their unbelief.

‘And there were present at that very time some that told Him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And He answering said to them : Think you that these Galileans were sinners above all the men of Galilee, because they suffered such things ? No, I say to you : but unless you shall do penance, you shall all likewise perish. Or those eighteen upon whom the tower fell in Siloe, and slew them : think you that they also were debtors above all the men that dwelt in Jerusalem ? No, I say to you : but except you do penance, you shall all likewise perish.’ (Luke xiii, 1-5.)

These two sayings of our Lord are here connected by S. Luke with the teaching recorded in the preceding chapter on avarice, watchfulness, and the giving of alms. We cannot make any attempt to decide when and where they were spoken, but since the facts which occasioned them took place in Jerusalem, they may safely be assigned to the time of the arrival of Jesus in the Holy City. We have here the same teaching as in the case of the man born blind (John ix, 2) : and its burden is that human calamities are not to be regarded as chastisements reserved by Almighty God for great sinners only. We are all sinners, and all exposed to misfortunes of a similar kind. We know nothing of the catastrophe at Siloe or of this Galilean revolt beyond what we are told in this passage ; but many similar facts are recorded of the ever-turbulent Galileans and of Pilate, always inclined to be cruel.<sup>1</sup>

It has been suggested that it was during this insurrection

<sup>1</sup> We give one example from among many others of acts of savage repression similar to those recorded here :

B. J., II, ix, 4, 175 : ‘A little later Pilate caused a fresh disturbance by using the sacred treasure of the Corbona to finance the construction of a new aqueduct, the water being brought from a distance of over fifty miles. As soon as this was known, the greatest indignation was felt among the people, who, shouting imprecations and threats, gathered in large numbers round Pilate’s tribunal, which was then at Jerusalem. Pilate, having foreseen a rising, had taken the precaution of distributing a large number of armed soldiers in civilian dress among the mob with instructions to refrain from using the sword while making free use of the club, the action to commence at an agreed signal, given from the tribunal, by himself. A great number of Jews perished, whether by the blows of the military or by being crushed in the panic that ensued ; while the main body of rioters, terror-struck, withdrew in silence.’

that Barabbas committed the crime for which he had been condemned ; and also that the brutal, murderous repression of so many Galileans was the cause of the dissension between Herod and Pilate. These conjectures are plausible enough but they can never be more than conjectures, and it is of greater importance to extract from these facts what is really relevant to the story of our Lord's life.

In the first place we have here some light on the brutal and violent character of Pilate himself. Nor is it only Josephus who depicts him in this way ; we have also Agrippa's letter to Caius as preserved in Philo (*Legat.*, 38, 299-302) : ' Pilate, who was procurator of Judea, dedicated some golden shields in Herod's palace, in the heart of the Holy City itself, not so much in honour of Tiberius as to annoy the people. . . . The fact becoming known, an assembly of the citizens was held and a deputation consisting of the King's four sons was sent to the Governor. . . . Pilate, however, who was a hard and obstinate man, returned a stubborn reply to their petition. Then the people shouted : " We will have no dealings with you, but will send deputies to the Emperor himself," which made him more angry than anything else had done. For he was afraid that in the event of deputies being sent to Rome, other faults in his administration would come out ; his vexatious measures, robberies, unjust dealings, outrages, illegal executions, and insufferable cruelty.'

The result was that Tiberius disowned the procurator and compelled him to transfer the offending shields to Cæsarea. The whole incident serves to reveal once again Pilate's character and that of his rule. And it was to this man, who slew citizens without trial, that Jesus was shortly to be given up.

On the other hand, opposed to this gloomy and cruel administration, was a population always on the verge of revolt. The Galileans were particularly suspect since the nationalist spirit ran higher and more turbulently in them than in the rest. In a few weeks, when Jesus would be brought before Pilate, his first impulse would certainly be to remark : ' Here is another of these Galileans like those in the last rebellion whom I had slain in the Temple.' And in the same way, later on, the tribune of the guard would take S. Paul for ' the Egyptian, leader of the brigands ' who had stirred up Judea a short time before (Acts xxi, 38). Such

being the situation, we have no difficulty in understanding that the Jewish leaders hoped to catch Jesus in the snare of Messianic claims, and to secure His immediate execution by the Roman procurator.

However, it was not His own danger that was in our Lord's mind just then ; the point of the disasters of which He had just spoken was the lesson they contained. ' Unless you shall do penance you shall all likewise perish ; ' a warning that was fulfilled in every detail with striking precision. Against the picture of the Galileans ' whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices,' we can put Josephus' description of the sack of the Temple, some years later on (B.J., V, 1, 3).

' The missiles hurled by the engines of war reached the Temple and the altar itself, falling on the priests and their assistants ; while many even of the pilgrims who had come from the ends of the earth to venerate this famous spot, sacred to the whole known world, fell in front of the sacrificial victims and reddened this altar, venerated by all, with their blood. Greeks and heathen, natives of the soil and foreigners alike, priests and laity, they fell indiscriminately, the blood flowing from so many corpses bathing the sacred altars like a sea.'

And our Divine Redeemer had sights like these in all their horror before His mind, knowing all the time that the conversion of the Jews would have removed the danger, once and for all. Consequently, He repeats the warning He had just given under the form of a parable thus recorded by S. Luke (xiii, 6-9) :

' He spoke also this parable : A certain man had a fig-tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it, and found none. And he said to the dresser of the vineyard : Behold for these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and I find none. Cut it down therefore, why cumbereth it the ground ? But he answering said to him : Lord, let it alone this year also, until I dig about it, and dung it. And if happily it bear fruit : but if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down.'

In this passage we have an echo of Isaiah's prophecy concerning Jehovah's vine (Is. v, 1-7). In both cases we meet the same loving care, the same deception, the same terrible threats. And yet Christ still holds out one last hope of

respite ; if this be neglected the punishment will be more terrible than that which the prophet foretold ; not mere abandonment only, but condemnation to death.<sup>1</sup>

Often in the following weeks will be heard warnings of a similar kind, all, alas, of no effect ! Jerusalem, Jehovah's cherished plantation, has no thought but to kill the prophets. Soon the Cross will be raised in her ; yet a few more years and her splendid buildings will fall upon the inhabitants like the Tower of Siloe, while in the courts of the profaned Temple, mingled like that of the Galileans with the blood of the victims, will flow the life-blood of thousands of Jews.

## II. *Jesus in Perea.*

For the first time we resume contact with the writers of the two first Synoptical Gospels. Both pass over in silence the journeys to Jerusalem that we have seen recorded in S. John ; and both are without anything corresponding to the great collection of sayings and parables found in the ninth to the eighteenth chapters of S. Luke ; while both record the discourse at Capharnaum as having taken place immediately before these, just after the Transfiguration of Christ. S. Matthew closes this long collection with the usual formula : ' and it came to pass when Jesus had finished his discourse.' Both again take us to the other side of the Jordan, in what proves to be the final departure of our Lord from Galilee, whither He would never return until He was risen from the dead. It must have been a sad experience to watch, fading into the distance, what had been the setting of so many familiar conversations, so many miracles and conversions to the truth. There were the Lake, Capharnaum, the Plain of Genesareth, all full of memories. But He ' set His face ' to go to Jerusalem. There the Passion and the Cross awaited Him, a new baptism, with which He hastened to be baptized.

In Perea—through the whole of which He now passed—

<sup>1</sup> It would seem tempting to press the parable a little further and to see in the three years of trial the three years' ministry of Christ, but such an interpretation is doubtful, to say the least. Even before the Incarnation Almighty God had come to look for the fruit on His fig-tree and had found it barren. Several of the Fathers see in these three years the principal phases of Old Testament history ; so Ambrose (P.L., XV, 1743) : Abraham, Moses, Mary ; and Cyril (P.G., LXXII, 753) : Moses, Josue and the Prophets. These are ingenious applications of our Lord's words rather than their direct sense. Here, again, we must not make an allegory of the parable, but must be content with seeing in the three years the time necessary for the fig-tree to bear fruit. If at the end of this time it is still barren, it is good for nothing but to be cut down.

Jesus carried on His ministry in the ordinary way ; S. Matthew stressing His miracles and S. Mark His teaching. The first incident recorded by either of them (Matt. xix, 1-12 ; Mark x, 1-12) was brought about by one of those interrogations to which the Pharisees were accustomed to subject our Lord. In the Sermon on the Mount (v, 31), among other points in the Mosaic system, He had considered the law of marriage in order to bring it to perfection, and in doing so prohibited divorce. Here was a great chance for the Pharisees to represent Jesus as opposed to the Law of Moses, a chance of which they were not slow to make the most.

We know the Mosaic Law on this question. A man who had grave cause of complaint against his wife could give her a bill of divorce and 'put her away.'<sup>1</sup>

We are aware, too, how the two great Jewish schools were opposed in the interpretation of this law ; that of Shammai only permitting divorce for the very gravest reason, particularly for infidelity, while the school of Hillel was ready to grant it for reasons of every kind—for a burnt dish at the table, or simply because the husband had found another more attractive woman. This second interpretation became the generally accepted one.<sup>2</sup>

This right of divorce was much cherished by the Jews, who regarded it as a privilege conceded to them but refused to the Gentiles.<sup>3</sup> In a directly contrary sense, Christ declared that it was only a concession to their hardness of heart, and

<sup>1</sup> The following is the text of such a document, taken from Alfasi's summary of the Talmud (Billerbeck, I, 311) : 'On such and such a day of the week, and such and such a day of the month, in such and such a year from the Creation of the World, according to the common computation, in such and such a place, I, N., son of N. and of N. or of whatever other name I may be called, of such and such a place, of my own motion, freely and without any compulsion whatsoever, do put away, dismiss and drive out thee, N., daughter of N. and of N. or of whatever other name thou mayst be called, of such and such a place, thee, who have been up to the present my wife. And I now repudiate thee ; thee, N., daughter of N. and N., or of whatever other name thou mayst be called, of such and such a place, so that thou art free and thine own mistress, able to marry whom thou pleasest, no man hindering thee ; this to date from to-day and for ever. See, then, thou art free to marry whom thou willest, and let this be to thee on my part, the instrument of repudiation, the letter of divorce, the certificate of dismissal, according to the Law of Moses and of Israel ! Reuben, son of Jacob, witness—Eleazar, son of Gilead, witness.'

<sup>2</sup> Cp. Weil's note on Josephus (A. J., IV, viii, 253) : 'A man who wishes to separate himself from the woman who dwells with him from any motive whatever—and this sort of man is common enough—is bound to declare in writing that he will have no further relations with her.' (Cp. A. J., XVI, 198 ; *Life*, 426.)

<sup>3</sup> *J. Qidduchin*, 58c, following the *amoraim* of the fourth century.

to the Mosaic legislation on the point He opposed the primitive plan of Almighty God as it appears in creation itself. On this question, Victor's comment throws a good deal of light.

'Christ's teaching here was hard to accept and likely to lead to misrepresentation, so He appealed straight to the primitive law. "From the beginning of Creation," He says, "God made them male and female," that is, from the beginning He prescribed something that was the very reverse of the current tradition. . . . Nor was His argument based only on the work of creation, but also even more on the direct precept of Almighty God . . . for by the law prescribed by Him, God makes it clear that the same man ought always to live with the same woman, without ever breaking the bond between them ; for they are, He says, born of one stock, and they form but one body.'

It is to be noticed that our Lord here appeals from the law of Moses to the primitive law—an appeal unique in the Gospels, although paralleled by S. Paul's similar appeal from Moses to Abraham. Only Christ Himself could have had the authority necessary to originate such a method, and to interpret the law as a Master. This authority had already been claimed in the Sermon on the Mount, but there it was used only to make the law more perfect and more personal in its scope. Here, too, our Lord's authority is exercised in the same sense, but it is more unequivocally affirmed, and does not hesitate to annul a concession of Moses himself. But, once safely home, the disciples, who were rather disturbed at our Lord's reply, were able to enter more deeply into the question, while His own treatment of it differs from His method in the more public setting of the Sermon on the Mount. Then He was speaking to the people as a whole, but now to the privileged audience of His own disciples ; and consequently, in this privacy, He did not shrink from stating a conclusion which He had not affirmed in the discourse itself. In S. Matthew's account we read : 'His disciples say unto Him : If the case of a man with his wife be so, it is not expedient to marry.' The following is S. Jerome's comment : 'Marriage becomes a heavy burden if a man can only dismiss his wife for adultery. What is to happen if she drinks, is bad-tempered, troublesome, dissipated, gluttonous, a gadabout, quarrelsome, a scandal-monger ? Must she be kept ? Yes, indeed, for better for



worse. We were free, and have voluntarily placed the yoke on our necks. So the Apostles, seeing that the yoke is indeed heavy, express their feelings quite simply in the remark : " If the case of a man with his wife be so, it is not expedient to marry." "

Our Lord did not contradict them by any means, but He raised their thoughts from those somewhat selfish levels to the quest of the kingdom of heaven. For the sake of that kingdom it was good to renounce marriage altogether. And He concludes with His customary formula when discoursing on a higher or more mysterious plane : " He that can take, let him take it."

And, in order to engrave it more deeply on their minds, Jesus, as He often chose to do, gave a slightly paradoxical turn to His teaching at this point. A Protestant author, Reuss, with little sympathy for the celibate state, has, none the less, very accurately reproduced the sense of our Lord's remarks about the eunuchs who had made themselves such for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. ' Generally,' he says, ' the term eunuch is applied to persons impotent by nature or mutilated by the hand of men ; but, for my part, I would also apply it to those who have freely and courageously renounced all that the married life can give of moral and material delight, in order to devote themselves to higher things.' And Reuss goes on to ask whether the last phrase, ' let him take it ' is to be understood only in an intellectual sense : ' Let him understand it, if he can,' or, as he himself prefers, ' in a moral sense,' translating : ' let him " take it " who can adopt this principle in his own life, rise to this height, impose such an obligation upon himself, and who is capable of such self-sacrifice, and we think,' he continues, ' that this is a perfect translation of the original.'

We entirely accept this second interpretation, but it does not exclude the first. On the contrary, the high moral standard here upheld by our Redeemer, as in so many other cases, can only be fully understood by those who have tried to apply it in real life. There is no question here of a merely speculative understanding of the matter, but of a sympathetic appreciation, that can enter into our Lord's intimate thought, make it our own and let it pour out into our lives. An Anglican writer, Plummer, also far from being favourable to celibacy, justly observes : ' This passage should be compared with Christ's sayings in which He declares that His

disciples must be ready, if called upon, to sacrifice all they possess, even their very life, for the love of Him.' Really, this is only just one of those counsels which are part of the scheme of the perfect life ; another of which had only lately been put by Jesus before the rich young man : ' If thou wilt be perfect, go sell what thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven. And come, follow Me.' Unfortunately the young man heard our Lord's words, but did not act on them. And it is the same thing here : many hear and read ; only a few apply the principles in their own lives. Later on we shall find S. Paul (1 Cor. vii, 8, 32) dropping hints of the same kind—restrained but full of power for those whom grace had touched.

' And they brought to Him young children, that He might touch them. And the disciples rebuked them that brought them. Whom when Jesus saw, He was much displeased and saith to them : Suffer little children to come unto Me and forbid them not ; for of such is the kingdom of God. Amen I say to you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall not enter into it. And embracing them and laying His hands upon them, He blessed them.' (Mark x, 13-16 ; cp. Matt. xix, 13-15 ; Luke xviii, 15-17.)

Earlier in the Gospel story (Matt. xviii, 2) we have seen Jesus enter a house at Capharnaum, drawing towards Him a little child and setting him forward as an example to His disciples, whose ambition was leading them astray. Here we have an incident of a somewhat similar kind. The scene is once more the interior of a house, whither the disciples have accompanied our Lord to have Him to themselves, and ask Him as many questions as they please. No sooner was He seen to enter, than children, probably those of the household, were brought to Him, much to the indignation of the disciples who thought they would weary the Master, and distract His attention from more important things, for example, the teaching He was giving to themselves. But Jesus is displeased at their attitude, and seized the opportunity furnished by the incident to repeat yet once again that it is to children and those like them that the kingdom of heaven belongs. So He embraces the little

ones, lays His hands on them and blesses them. A charming scene and rightly dear to the piety of the Christian world.<sup>1</sup>

Following on this passage in the three Synoptic Gospels we have the story of the rich young man (Matt. xix, 16-30 ; Mark x, 17-31 ; Luke xviii, 18-30) which forms a fitting conclusion to our Lord's teaching on evangelical perfection. As we have already commented upon it (*supra*, pp. 94 ff.) we will not return to it here, passing straight on to the parable of the workers in the Vineyard, which follows immediately in S. Matthew (xx, 11-16), but is not found in the other synoptical writers.

This parable has been discussed almost as much as that of the Unjust Steward and it is a stumbling-block to a good many people to-day. 'Equal work, equal wages,' is a well-known slogan, and our Lord seems to teach the exact contrary here. The truth is that it was not His intention, in this passage, to throw light on the social question, or the wages problem, or anything of the kind, as will be easily seen by closer study of the text.

The theme of the parable is borrowed from everyday life. Vineyards are rare in Palestine, to-day, but, in our Lord's time, olives and vines were everywhere. The proprietor introduced by our Lord goes out in the early morning to look for labourers. In the East the vine is much less carefully tended than in the West, and its care requires less manual work, since it is left to creep on the ground, without being supported or tied up. For the vintage, however, labour is needed, there as everywhere else. A working day had

<sup>1</sup> Jewish writers have sought to show that this tenderness for little children is the authentic spirit of Judaism. Thus Abrahams (*Studies in Pharisaism*, 119) relates the following passage from the rabbinical collection *Echa Rabba* : 'The Rabbi sent R. Assi and R. Ammi to visit the towns of Palestine and see that all local affairs were in order. So one fine day they arrived in a certain town and asked to see the guardians of the place, upon which they brought them the chiefs of the military. "But these good men," said the Rabbis, "are not the guardians of the town, they are its destroyers." "Who then," they were asked, "are its true guardians?" "Surely," they replied, "the teachers in the schools. The peoples of the earth ask : 'Can we prevail against Israel?' No, not if you can hear the children's voices, stumbling over their lessons in the synagogues. . . . See how God loves children. When the Sanhedrin were in exile the Shekinah did not follow them ; when the priests were exiled the Shekinah remained behind. But when the children were exiled the Shekinah went with them, for it is written : 'Her children are led into captivity' (Lam. i, 5), and almost immediately after : 'From the daughter of Sion all her beauty is departed.'" A touching passage ; but its spirit is quite different from that of the Gospel ; what is admired in these children being merely the study of the Law.

dawned, and since the proprietor's regular employees would not be sufficient, it was necessary at once to see about hiring others. Nor would this be difficult ; there was no need to look far or to make arrangements in advance. All that was necessary was to visit the public resorts of the town, and more especially the neighbourhood of its gates, where the employer of labour would be sure to find what he sought. The good man in our story did so, and a contract was made on terms of a penny a day.<sup>1</sup>

Having engaged his workmen, the master followed them to the vineyard ; but he knew that the work was urgent and that his helpers were not yet enough. So he returned to the public places at the third, sixth, ninth, and, finally, the eleventh hour. It must not be thought that the labourers he hired thus late had become lazy through enforced idleness ; they responded to the first invitation to work that came their way, making no agreement as to terms with the proprietor, but leaving the matter to him. At last evening comes, the time of payment ; and, following his master's instructions, the steward paid the late-comers first. This was necessary in the parable, the point of which depended upon those hired first being able to compare their wages with the sum that the late-comers received. This they did, and were highly indignant at the result. The master took it all calmly, but reminded them of their contract ; surely he can dispose at will of his own money, without anyone having the right to look askance at what he does.

The story is clear enough, but the question of application arises. Two, not mutually exclusive, interpretations have been advanced. There are two classes of workmen in the story, those hired at the beginning of the day, and the rest. With the first class there had been a formal contract, but not with the second ; but the payment was the same, and jealousy at once arose among those who had borne the 'burden of the day and the heats.' Thus reduced to its essential elements the parable seems clear enough : the first class represents the Jews who had long been workers in God's vineyard under a contract of a very definite kind—in other words the Law, with its clearly defined obligations

<sup>1</sup> This was the sum that Tobias offered to his son's guide : Tob. v, 15 (Greek version) : ' I will give you a drachma and all that is necessary.' There was no question of providing food ; no doubt it was the same then as in the East to-day ; the workman shifted for himself with a little bread and olives and other fruits (Fonck, p. 352).

and rewards. But there are other workers, long idle because unreached by the Master's call. No sooner do they hear it than they betake themselves to the work at once, but without contract or agreement of any kind ; late-comers, they throw themselves into their task with all the energy at their command, relying on the Master to treat them justly, and when evening comes they are pleasantly surprised to receive payment for a whole day's work. The Jews are indignant both at the call itself and at the reward, but Almighty God would have them know that He is the Master of His own gifts and that He has done them no wrong at all. In their murmurs we have an echo of the elder brother's indignant complaint.<sup>1</sup>

This comparison with the Prodigal Son reminds us of S. Damasus' question to S. Jerome and the reply. In the early labourers, representing the eldest son in the companion parable, we can see the Jews, but also, in a wider sense, every just person who, like the Pharisees, prides himself on his righteousness, and looks askance at the overflowing mercy of God. We shall grasp the point better if we compare this parable of the Gospel with one of the Talmud, similar in theme but very different in its moral bearing.<sup>2</sup>

'To whom is Rabbi Bun bar Chaija to be compared? To a king who hired many workmen. Among them was one who had performed a difficult piece of work with conspicuous ability and care. So what did the king do, but make him his companion and take him about wherever he went. At evening time the workmen came to receive their wages, and this man received full wages like the rest. Whereat the labourers murmured, saying: "We have worked hard all day, and this man who has only worked two hours, receives the same wages as we." But the king replied: "This man has done more in two hours than you in a whole day." In the same way Rabbi Bun applied himself more to a study of the Law in twenty-eight years than

<sup>1</sup> Loisy, 228: 'At bottom this parable has the same meaning as that of the Prodigal Son. Our Lord had no intention of teaching that absolute equality is the law of the kingdom of heaven, for elsewhere He lays it down that there is a certain proportion between sacrifice and reward, and that there are differences between the many mansions in the kingdom of heaven' (Luke xix, 11-27; Matt. xix, 28, 29): but He rejects the whole idea of privileges for certain groups and proclaims God's goodness and justice to all men without distinction of any kind.'

<sup>2</sup> *J. Berakot*, II, 8; cp. Fonck, 360.

did others in a hundred years.’<sup>1</sup> In this little story, it is the exceptional assiduity that the Master rewards, while in the Gospel parable it is of His own generosity. Already we have a hint of this lesson in Wisdom iv, 13 : ‘ Being made perfect in a short time, he fulfilled a long time. For his soul pleased God. Therefore He hastened to bring him out of the midst of iniquities.’ And we find it more strongly stated in S. Paul (Rom. ix, 14-16) : ‘ What shall we say then ? Is there injustice with God ? God forbid ! For He saith to Moses : I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy. And I will shew mercy to whom I will shew mercy. So then it is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.’

Above all, God is independent in the distribution of His gifts and jealous of His independence ; nor must the just who have long served Him take it amiss that the sinner who, although late, has answered God’s call should receive the same reward as themselves.

This personal application of the parable, to the just and sinners, seems to be suggested by the evangelist himself ; for the words with which he introduces the story closely connect it with what has just gone before, that is, with our Lord’s reply to S. Peter’s question inspired by the incident of the rich young man. ‘ . . . you, who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit on the seat of his majesty, you also shall sit on twelve seats. And many that are first shall be last : and the last shall be first.’ And this same sentence comes at the end of the parable, as its fitting conclusion : ‘ But many that are first shall be last, and the last first ;’ with evident reference to our Lord’s disciples, many of whom, in the eyes of the Pharisees, were the least in the kingdom of heaven. But they have become the first.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> On the Jewish conception of Divine Retribution as compared with Christ’s teaching here, cp. Billerbeck, *Exkurs* 20 (IV, pp. 484-500).

<sup>2</sup> A good many manuscripts add : ‘ Many are called but few chosen.’ We shall find these words elsewhere (xxii, 14). They do not seem to be in place here.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE RAISING OF LAZARUS. JESUS AT JERICHÖ

#### *I. The Raising of Lazarus.*

THE story contained in chapter xi of S. John's Gospel is of capital importance both for the evangelist and for ourselves, since the whole purpose of this Gospel, dictating the choice of episodes and apparently of miracles, is to ground the faith of its readers in Jesus Christ the Son of God (xx, 31), and from that point of view, no other miracle could have been so effective as this. The raising to life of a person who had been dead for four days, corruption having already set in, and this at the very gates of Jerusalem and on the eve of the Passover before a crowd of witnesses, favourable and otherwise, is manifestly a work of God, bearing the clearest possible witness to His Divine Son. At the same time it is a revelation of His glory: the Word made flesh is the life of the world, a fact never more evidently shown than on this day when, by a word, He raised the dead to life.

These two aspects of the miracle cannot be separated from each other; here, as throughout the Fourth Gospel, the flesh is shown united to the spirit, so that—in this outstanding event, especially—the historical reality of the fact cannot be severed from its theological meaning. It is, most surely, a revelation from on high into which faith alone can fully penetrate but which is, at the same time, a reality that can be seen and touched. And this is rendered all the more sure by its close connection with our Lord's condemnation and death, which form the last phase of His life.

It was the commotion caused by this miracle that precipitated the Sanhedrin's final decision to bring about the death of Christ. In his *Vie de Jésus*, Renan was compelled to reduce this whole narrative to a misunderstanding, while at the same time he had to recognize that this 'misunderstanding' was a necessary support of the whole historical structure

whose solidity he did not for a moment deny. 'It is a remarkable thing,' he says, 'that the story of the raising of Lazarus is so closely linked with these last pages of the Gospel that, if it be rejected as imaginary, the whole structure of these last weeks of Jesus' life, so solidly presented here, falls at a single blow' (513-514). It is enough to read these two passages to realize the inconsistency of the author's position.

We can readily understand that the silence of the Synoptics on so stupendous a miracle is bound to cause some surprise. This silence ought to be explained, and it can be;<sup>1</sup> but what is not only inexplicable but clearly inadmissible is the theory that we have here an allegory embodied in fiction, the fruit of S. John's imagination; that when he wished to ground the faith of the disciples on certain testimony, he relied upon the wildest dreams, and that he explained the murderous resolve of Caiphas and his party as the effect of a miracle imagined by himself.

The precise and detailed introduction prefixed by S. John to this portion of his narrative carries us back once more beyond Jordan to the scenes where John baptized and to which our Lord withdrew after the Feast of the Dedication (x, 40), and it was in this quarter that He was found by the messengers whom Martha and Mary had sent. We may reckon about five hours' journey from Bethania to Jericho, and if one or two more hours are allowed for the passage of the Jordan, it would have meant a day's travel before Jesus could have been reached. After receiving the message He stayed where He was for another two days before setting out, and reached Bethania four days after Lazarus' death; so it was not until the last moment that the two sisters had sent to tell Jesus what was happening, the sick man dying while

<sup>1</sup> The best explanation is based on the system of instruction followed by the Synoptics, which passed lightly over our Lord's ministry in Jerusalem up to Palm Sunday; a method probably imposed by S. Peter himself on those responsible for the catechetical teaching of the primitive church. Peter, personally, had been intimately connected with the Galilean ministry, while he does not seem to have followed that of Judea to the same extent. (Cp. Bernard, *S. John*, pp. clxxxiii and 381; Lagrange, *L'Evangile*, p. 408.) Besides, it would seem that even in our Lord's lifetime the Jewish authorities contemplated getting rid of Lazarus (John xii, 10), and probably their hostility still pursued him later on, and his sisters as well. Consequently silence was dictated both by prudence and by the respect due to our Lord's friends. On the other hand, when John wrote, Jerusalem had been destroyed, the Sanhedrin had lost all power, and the family of Bethania had ceased to exist. Similarly, at the present day, after half a century passes, any biographer possesses a freedom in writing that would not be his on the morrow of his hero's death.



the messenger was still on his way. We may fairly infer that the disease took a rapid course, but it is at the same time most probable that our Lord's friends, knowing the danger He ran in Judea, hesitated to call Him back. It is in harmony with this that when, in view of the imminent crisis, they decided to inform Jesus, they did not even then ask Him to come, but merely sent the message : ' He whom Thou lovest is sick.' By way of introducing the sick man to his readers, S. John notes that he lived at Bethania and was brother to Martha and Mary, which proves that the two sisters were known in the Christian community ; and, to be more definite still, he recalls Jesus' anointing at Mary's hands. If Mary and the Magdalene are to be identified, this anointing would be the same as that narrated by S. Luke (vii, 37) ; if they are distinguished, it may be thought that S. John here mentions in advance the anointing to be recorded later on (xii, 3) no doubt already well known to those who would read his book.

Our Lord's reply, as often, in S. John's pages, was of a mysterious kind : ' This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God : that the Son of God may be glorified by it.' This was naturally taken both by the messenger and by the disciples as implying that the sickness was not mortal, but our Lord was looking further than that. By this death, which was no more than a passing accident, He saw that the common glory shared by His Father and Himself would be made known ; the same miracle was about to glorify both Father and Son and at the same time be a revelation of both.

' Jesus loved Martha and her sister Mary.' We may wonder why this love is mentioned here. Our Lord's words are sometimes connected with those almost immediately following : ' He still remained in the place two days,' the inference being that just because He loved them He wished to test their love and trust in Him. The thought is sound enough, but as an interpretation of the present passage it seems a little forced, while it would appear natural to take all that follows as expressing one idea, namely, that *because* He loved them He went to them after the two days' delay. And if it be asked further, whether this same delay was to give time for Lazarus' death in order to increase the stupendous nature of the miracle about to be performed, we reply that this would not seem to be the case, especially since, as we have seen, Lazarus was already dead when the

messenger reached our Lord. At this solemn moment, as all through His life, Jesus awaited His Father's time. 'My hour is not yet come,' He had once said at Cana of Galilee. And now, once more, He waited, and when the hour predestined by His Father came, then, and then only, did He set forth.

And it was then that He said to His disciples : ' Let us go into Judea again.' It was just this return into Judea that they feared, and it was to cure them of this fear that the Master makes a point of calling forth its avowal. And the disciples respond at once : ' Rabbi, the Jews but now sought to stone Thee and goest Thou thither again ? ' Here we sense something of the state of mind described by S. Mark (x, 32), when Jesus went before, and they followed astonished and afraid. And our Lord reassured them by one of those sayings so often on His lips, and especially recorded by S. John. When, at the Feast of Tabernacles, He was about to cure the man born blind He had said : ' I must work the works of Him that sent Me, whilst it is day ; the night cometh when no man can work ' (ix, 4). And it is the same thing now : ' Are there not twelve hours of the day ? If a man walk in the day he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. But if he walk in the night, he stumbleth because the light is not in him.' And a little later He will be saying to His hearers : ' Yet a little while, the light is among you. Walk whilst you have the light, that the darkness overtake you not. And he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. Whilst you have the light believe in the light, that you may be the children of the light ' (xii, 35-36). True, the sense is a little different here where He is no longer speaking of Himself but of those who follow Him and walk in His light. But the root idea is the same. While we have God's protection and walk in His light, progress is assured and work fruitful. In that light He Himself was walking at the moment, but in a few days the night would have come upon Him and He would tell His enemies : ' . . . this is your hour and the power of darkness ' (Luke xxii, 53).

But here He went on at once to say : ' Lazarus our friend sleepeth : but I go that I may awake Him out of sleep.' As so often, the disciples failed to understand, and always fearing this journey into Judea, took advantage of His words to dissuade Him from going there. ' If he is sleeping,' they

said, in effect, 'he will recover, therefore why expose yourself to needless danger?' But Jesus persisted in His resolve and at last told them plainly: 'Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe. But let us go to him.' It was then that Thomas said: 'Let us go also, that we may die with Him,' a remark that betrayed more love than trust; for in spite of the Master's encouragement he could not shake off the impression that they were going to their deaths, although he meant to go with a good heart. It was the same after the Resurrection. Deeply attached to Christ, and utterly overcome by His death, he abandoned himself to discouragement, as now to his fears. So they set forth.

The scene is now abruptly transferred to Bethania near the gates of Jerusalem. The name of the present-day village, *El-Azarieh*, recalls the memory of the miracle, but the place itself is a mere hamlet inhabited by some thirty families of the Mohammedan faith. Martha and Mary were there when our Lord arrived, but not alone, a good number of their Jewish friends having come to pay the visits of condolence in the customary way. The term 'Jew' usually has a sinister significance with S. John, and it is the same here, for we shall see before long that these visitors were hostile to our Lord. The presence of this ill-favoured company explains many of the details in the events about to be described, and makes the miracle more evident by supplying witnesses who up to then had been adversaries of Christ.

The two sisters themselves appear here with the same diverse characters as in S. Luke (x, 38). Martha is still the woman of activity and the mistress of the house; it is she who was told that Jesus had arrived, and upon receiving the news she went to meet Him at once. Mary, less active and more sensitive, was entirely absorbed in her grief, remaining in her room and knowing nothing of what was going on outside. Martha's first word is a cry of grief and regret, quite unmingled with reproach. 'If Thou hadst been here,' not, 'if Thou hadst come,' were the words she used. No doubt the cause of that fatal absence was our Lord's persecution by the Jews, but the stark fact was that the sisters had lost their support and that he whom Jesus loved was dead. However, Martha still hoped without being able to define her hope: 'I know that whatever Thou shalt ask of God, God will give it Thee.' It was only the expression of an

imperfect faith, but it was a beginning, and Jesus meant to strengthen and develop it. 'Thy brother shall rise again,' He said, confining Himself to a general statement in order to lead Martha to a higher level of thought. But at present she dared not go any further, taking her stand on the Jewish belief in a general resurrection and uncertain if she ought to ask for anything more. It was for Christ Himself to lead her on if He so willed, and so, still without definitely promising the half-foreshadowed miracle, He confined Himself to the general statement that should be the foundation of Martha's faith and of that of Christians in every age: 'I am the Resurrection and the Life.' It was a lesson that had been already given in the discourse on the Bread of Life, and the line of exposition followed in both cases is the same. Commencing by a general statement to be made more precise later on (vi, 35): 'I am the Bread of Life,' Martha understood that the Master was calling upon her to believe, and responded by making a profession of faith in which she gave a full and deliberate adhesion to the mystery He revealed: 'Yea, Lord, I have believed that Thou art Christ, the Son of the Living God, who art come into the world.'<sup>1</sup> Then she calls Mary, her sister, saying in a low voice: 'The Master is come and calleth for thee.'

The whole episode now moves on; tensely and rapidly, with every incident in place. Probably Jesus Himself sent Martha to look for Mary, at the same time counselling her to act in secret; for the danger realized by the Apostles with growing apprehension as they approached Jerusalem was only too real, and the Jews surrounding Mary at the moment were for the most part enemies of our Lord. Martha fulfilled her mission with discretion, but she could not keep all her friends from following her sister, and Almighty God could make these hostile bystanders minister to His greater glory. Mary was absorbed in grief and

<sup>1</sup> Godet justly observes: 'It would be strangely to underrate this profession of Martha if, like some, we were to see in it a simple confession of inability to understand what Jesus had just said. "I understand nothing of the profound truths of which you are speaking, but I believe you to be the Messiah." This would be almost to burlesque a scene of the utmost gravity. By her simple reply: "Yes, Lord," Martha certainly accepted everything that Jesus had just stated about Himself. Only she did not feel in a position to put into words on her own account her faith in mysteries so new to her, and so used familiar terms to express the fact that to her Jesus represented all that was greatest and best, and that whatever He might say about Himself would never be too much, at least for the faith of her with whom He was speaking then.'

love, but she rose at once and throwing herself at the Master's feet repeated her sister's words : ' Lord, if Thou hadst been here my brother had not died.' In consoling Martha, more active in disposition and temperament and less absorbed in her grief, our Lord had appealed to her faith ; with Mary, more highly strung and therefore suffering more, He acted differently and wept with her. This keen emotion of Jesus has been interpreted in various ways. In one view it was a reaction against the false grief of those who surrounded Him ; others ascribe it to mental anguish at the tyranny of death and of the Devil ; while others see in it a strong reaction on our Lord's part against a too sentimental emotion which He wished to keep in check ; Loisy would carry the whole incident into the metaphysical sphere : ' Christ,' he says, ' was filled with loathing at the sight of all these people weeping over a dead body in the presence of Him who is the Source of all Life.'<sup>1</sup> Such explanations are too subtle, and fail to express the intense emotion and simple naturalness of the scene. We have here, before all else, grief for a dead friend, together with indignation at the hostility of so many of those present, whom the miracle will in no way convince, but rather supply them with a deadly weapon against our Lord Himself.<sup>2</sup> However, controlling His emotion, our Lord asked : ' Where have you laid him ? ' and followed where Mary and her companions led the way, weeping as He went.

Once more we are conscious of the reality of the human nature that the Son of God had taken to Himself : ' If,' remarks Godet, ' Saint John's Gospel was, as Baur believed, the product of mere speculative thought, this particular verse (31) would not be here at all. Jesus would have raised His friend with a look of triumph and a light heart, as a veritable *Logos*, human in outward appearance and in

<sup>1</sup> *Quatrième Evangile*, 2nd ed., p. 350.

<sup>2</sup> Godet remarks : ' For a similar display of emotion we have to turn to John xiii, 21, where Jesus is seen bracing Himself to face the fact of Judas' treachery. " He was troubled in spirit . . ." a parallel that throws some light on our Lord's action here. . . . By this miracle, the most glorious that He ever worked, He supplied His enemies with an additional motive for His condemnation. A section of the very people whose sobs urged Him to action would be among those who would make Him pay for the crime of having conquered death. Horror seized Him at the thought, revealing a devilish perversity that shook His pure soul to its uttermost depths. We may recall Jesus' own saying : " Many good works I have shewed you from My Father. For which of these works do you stone Me ? " Here we have the most direct application of these words.'

nothing else. . . . It is not with a heart heavy as a stone that one raises someone from the dead.'

This is the only passage in the Gospels<sup>1</sup> in which we read of the tears of Christ (ἐδάκρυσεν, *lacrimatus est*), with the exception of Luke (xix, 41), where we see Jesus weeping (ἐκλαυσεν, *flevit*) over Jerusalem. In both cases we are conscious of the depth of human emotion thus moved by the death of a friend and indeed of all mankind, and grieving over the approaching destruction of His city and His race.

In view of an affection so tender and moving as this, the Jews became divided among themselves, and it is at this point that we begin to sense the hostility that, at least in a number of cases, the miracle could in no way disarm. Some gave way to the emotion of the moment, remarking simply: 'Behold how He loved him.' But others threw off all such impressions with the argument: 'Could not He that opened the eyes of the man born blind, have caused that this man shouldst not die?' They would not so argue for long, it is true, but the fact that they did so at all is enough to betray their hesitation, and even suspicion. It seemed difficult to think that such grief could be sincere, in view of such powers over nature as He seemed to possess. Or perhaps, after all, the recent miracle was not really the wonderful work that it had been taken to be. No allusion seems to have been made to the other occasions when our Lord had raised from the dead. These miracles had taken place far from Jerusalem. No, it was the cure of the man born blind which affected them so profoundly. They had witnessed it themselves and its memory was still fresh in the Holy City.

'Jesus, therefore, again groaning within Himself, cometh to the sepulchre. Now it was a cave and a stone was laid over it.'

This summary description of Lazarus' tomb may be supplemented by what we know generally of Jewish burial customs, and by what we can still see in Palestine at the tombs of the kings, or, notably, at that of our Lord Himself. These tombs are simply caverns, natural or otherwise, in the solid rock, closed by a large stone rolled to the entrance. In the present case, the stone seems to have been placed in front of the cavity rather than against it, so that to leave the tomb Lazarus would have no need to climb over the edge but

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Heb. v, 7.

merely to cross the threshold of the cave. Here, therefore, our Lord came, groaning afresh as He heard around Him the murmurs of witnesses without faith. Then came the command: 'Take away the stone'; Mary remains passive, but Martha intervenes, moved by consideration for our Lord and by a kind of sisterly modesty. Lazarus had been lying there four days now and 'he stinketh'; a fact she had, no doubt, noticed in one of her visits to the tomb.

This intervention must not be taken as a sign of incredulity on Martha's part. In no sense was she disowning her recent profession of faith in Christ, but she was wholly preoccupied by her mourning, and had little thought for anything but the tomb and for him who lay there. And, for the last time, our Lord called her to a higher plane: '. . . if thou believe thou shalt see the glory of God.' It is the lesson that our Lord was constantly teaching: men only believe when they have seen; while, really, sight should be the reward of faith.

Then Jesus raised His eyes as if to His Father in heaven and gave thanks in a loud voice. This act of thanksgiving was a kind of solemn attestation publicly made, before a miracle which would be decisive in evidential value, and in the presence of witnesses hopelessly divided among themselves. We are reminded here of one of the first scenes of the Galilean ministry; the cure of the paralytic at Capharnaum, in the presence of doubting and suspicious scribes: '. . . That you may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins. . . .' On this occasion such a declaration was even more necessary, in the presence of bystanders more malevolent still, and at the close of a ministry soon to be broken by death. But this time the testimony was to be of a more striking character than ever before.

In a loud voice, our Lord called upon Lazarus to come forth. In all cases where He raised from the dead, Christ acted as the Master of life and death. It was so with the widow's son, and with Jairus' daughter, but it is more manifest here than ever before. No doubt, so far as the miracle itself was concerned, it was quite immaterial whether the dead was audibly addressed or raised by a silent act of the will. But on this occasion our Lord was thinking of those around Him, openly giving thanks to His Father and now publicly calling Lazarus, for their sakes alone. And suddenly at our Lord's words, the dead man

came forth from the tomb, still bandaged and enveloped in his shroud. S. John makes no attempt to describe the emotion of the sisters or the excitement of the crowd, and we will not attempt it either. We prefer instead to call attention to the perfect composure of our Lord Himself, always noticeable on these occasions. These miraculous works were natural to Him, involving no disturbance or excitement of any kind : at Naim He had simply handed the young man over to his mother, and when He had raised Jairus' daughter with the words *Talitha cumi* He merely ordered that she should be given something to eat. And it is the same here : 'Loose him and let him go,' as He had said to the paralytic : 'Take up thy bed and walk.' Life is restored simply and completely, and there is nothing more to be done but to live and go one's way.

'Many therefore of the Jews, who were come to Mary and Martha and had seen the things that Jesus did, believed in Him. But some of them went to the Pharisees, and told them the things that Jesus had done.' (John xi, 45-46.)

And so immediately after this moving scene, full of the Divine Glory, we turn to human scheming seen in its cruellest and most sordid form. But this very contrast only lights up this miracle of friendship all the more. By returning to Bethania and performing before so many witnesses such a striking deed of wonder, there is no doubt that Jesus hastened His own death. So in the raising of Lazarus we see not only a gracious gift from the Son of God, but also the heroic devotion of a friend to whom the miracle would cost His own life. Here, too, we can see more clearly than in any other episode in the Gospels the different reactions that the same divine work could produce in different souls ; a lesson of which we cannot but remind those whose temptation it is to be always looking for further light from God. Surely nothing clearer could be desired than this raising of a dead man, already in a state of decomposition, by a single word. And yet, as always, God's light could only enlighten those who wished to see ; leaving the others blinder still. The first believed and the others hurried to denounce Jesus to His foes.

It is often asked what it was that these people could find to denounce. To raise a man from the dead is not a crime



nor matter for an informer to use. Consequently, some ancient authors, for example Theodore of Mopsuestia, have conjectured that the accusation was one of sacrilege on account of the disinterment of a corpse. But this is to go too far to look for an explanation that is clear enough in the text itself. When the council actually met, almost the first words uttered were : ‘ This man doth many miracles.’ That was what the Pharisees were told and what alarmed them so much ; Jesus could not be restrained or controlled in His work, and He must therefore be got rid of altogether. And of this attitude the informers are well aware : their purpose is to intensify it by the news of this latest miracle, either because they share the opinions of Jesus’ enemies or because they wish to flatter them. It was the Pharisees they approached—those first opponents of Christ who, from the earliest days of His preaching, had persecuted Him in Jerusalem and throughout Judea, and had then followed Him everywhere He went in Galilee, in Philip’s territory, and in Perea. Very soon, however, more formidable enemies took the matter in hand : these were the members of the high-priestly circle—all Sadducees. Too sceptical to be much interested in the theological and legistic questions canvassed by the Pharisees, they were too politically minded to ignore our Lord’s Messianic claims. Up to then they had played only an obscure part in the opposition to Him, but from then on they would come more and more to the front. Henceforth it was not a question of excommunication or of being cast out of the synagogue, but of death itself. Both the leading parties were represented in the Sanhedrin ; those in the circle of the High Priest being Sadducees while the Scribes were Pharisees. Later, when the same assembly met to sit in judgement on S. Paul, the Apostle was able to find a way of putting the representatives of these two fundamentally opposed factions at loggerheads with each other ; but we shall see them united against our Lord, urged on by motives, different, but equally strong. No doubt this particular meeting was inspired by the Pharisees, who having received the news of the miracle and its effect, would have communicated it to the priests. There was no question, on either side, of our Lord’s miracles being denied ; the Pharisees had already recognized them anyhow, attributing them to Beelzebub ; while the Sadducees would not be likely to be interested in them

except to resent them as so many acts of imprudence in an already sufficiently dangerous affair.

Almost at once Caiphas intervened in the discussion with a crude and overbearing remark, 'You know nothing,' he said, 'neither do you consider that it is expedient for you that one man should die for the people and that the whole nation perish not.' This Caiphas was the High Priest for that year; since, although the High Priesthood was a lifelong charge, the Romans had suppressed the Jewish tradition on this point and frequently deposed the High Priest for any reason that commended itself to themselves. Thus Josephus (A.J., XVIII, ii, 2, 34) records the fact that Valerius Gratus 'took away the High Priesthood from Annas and conferred it on Ishmael, then, shortly after having deposed him, set up Eleazar, Annas' son; after a year deposing him in his turn and appointing Simon in his place, who having held the office for not more than a year was succeeded by Joseph, surnamed Caiphas'; Caiphas, owing his appointment to the favour of the Romans in A.D. 25, was himself set aside by Vitellius in the year 37. Caiphas was son-in-law of Annas who had been High Priest from A.D. 7 to 14 and still retained the principal influence in the nation, in spite of his removal from power. His intervention at this time bears out Josephus' description of the character of the Sadducees (B.J., II, viii, 14, 166): 'The Pharisees were distinguished by mutual affection and studied concord among themselves for the sake of their common good: but the ways of the Sadducees were much rougher, both among themselves and towards their fellow-countrymen, whom they treated as members of a foreign race.'

Caiphas' brutal and cynical advice meant only one thing in the mind of him who gave it, namely that to remove the danger of a struggle with Rome, it was necessary to get rid of our Lord. But, all unknown to himself, his words had a much deeper meaning. Christ's death would be truly the salvation of the Jews, and not of the Jews only but of all mankind. So, of old, had the Spirit of God fallen upon Balaam, making him bless God's people in spite of himself (Num. xxiv, 5); so did other enemies of Almighty God, such as Pharaoh and Nabuchodonosor, dream prophetic dreams without being always able to interpret them themselves (Gen. xxi, 2; Dan. iv, 2). And the evangelist, while struck by the hidden sense of Caiphas' pronouncement,

shows that this was more than fulfilled in the event, for all God's scattered children were to be reunited in one body, and that by our Lord's death. 'When I am lifted up, I will draw all men to Me.'

Jesus was no doubt informed of this secret meeting of the Sanhedrin, possibly by Nicodemus, and, consequently, withdrew from the city. So far from this being a hasty flight, it was a calm and prudent retreat. He knew that His hour was not yet come, and He would not be seized before He so willed, but He intended to take the precautions that prudence would normally suggest. The little town of Ephrem, frequently associated with Bethel (II Paral. xiii, 19 ; B.J., IV, ix, 9), was some leagues to the north of Jerusalem, and, as the evangelist remarks, was 'near the desert,' which made it easy, in case of pursuit by the Jews, to escape thither and from there to pass into Perea. This was, in fact, the route that our Lord followed when He went up to keep the Passover ; to Jericho by way of the desert, and thence to Jerusalem itself.

In spite of the measures passed by the Sanhedrin, probably no great pains were taken just then in the attempt to secure our Lord. It would not be difficult to track Him and His little band of companions as far as Ephrem, but the main object of the Jewish leaders in decreeing His arrest was, by publicly outlawing Him, to intimidate His followers, and force Him to hide Himself. In that way the paschal celebrations could pass without incident, and immediately afterwards they would take the final steps to carry out their plans. But our Lord was about to upset these arrangements and to show His sovereign independence of all human scheming by riding as a conqueror into the Holy City. No doubt this would lead straight to His death, but it would not be the obscure and unknown death planned by His enemies ; on the contrary He would die at the height of the Paschal Feast, surrounded by the Jews gathered together from all parts.

## *II. The Journey to Jerusalem. The Sons of Zebedee.*

'And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem : and Jesus went before them, and they were astonished : and following were afraid. And taking again the twelve, He began to tell them the things that should befall Him. Saying : Behold we go up to Jerusalem, and the Son of

man shall be betrayed to the chief priests, and to the scribes and ancients, and they shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him to the gentiles. And they shall mock Him, and spit on Him, and scourge Him and kill Him : and the third day He shall rise again.' (Mark x, 32-34.)<sup>1</sup>

This is the third occasion on which the Synoptics describe our Lord as foretelling His own death,<sup>2</sup> a perfectly natural thing to do under the circumstances of the moment. The Lord was on His way to Jerusalem, and a presentiment of the gravest danger was in the minds of all his followers. S. Mark's narrative shows Him walking at the head of His little band, but behind Him there was nothing but perplexity and fear. The twelve were not His only followers, for there was still the little band of disciples who had surrounded Him ever since the journey had begun. Jesus stopped a moment to let the twelve come up with Him, and then walked on with them while He told them what they would have to expect, this time in clearer and more detailed terms than ever before. He had already foretold His betrayal, condemnation, death and resurrection ; and now, for the first time, He mentions His deliverance to the Gentiles, implying His crucifixion, more explicitly included in S. Matthew's version. For the first time, too, is it foretold that the ' Son of Man ' is to be mocked, spit upon and scourged, but, once more for the first time, Jesus now adds to these terrible predictions the promise of His Rising from the Dead. And still the Apostles fail to understand, betraying a blindness in the face of repeated warnings that has astonished many. Yet the explanation is simple when once we remember what kind of Messias it was that was expected by these men. The more their faith in Jesus as the Messias grew, the more averse they became to these terrible prophecies, which did

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Matt. xx, 17-19 ; Luke xviii, 31-34 ; where we have the same prediction with some variations. Thus Matthew has ' and (He shall be) crucified ' ; Matthew and Luke : ' and the third day He shall rise again ' ; Luke : ' And they understood none of these things, and this word was hid from them : and they understood not the words that were said.' Mark supplies the details about the Apostles' sadness, and Jesus walking at the head of His little band. Luke only notes that all these sufferings had been foretold by the prophets with reference to the Son of Man.

<sup>2</sup> The first was after Cæsarea Philippi (Mark viii, 31), and the second after the Transfiguration (Mark ix, 31). S. Luke adds a third (xvii, 25) which he embodies in a prediction of the Second Coming. It is most probable that more than one warning of this kind had been given to the Apostles without being recorded in the Gospels.

violence to all their dreams. So they turned away their minds from them only wishing to remember the promise of His resurrection ; this was to be His final triumph and they were impatient to take their part in it.

And this explains the incident that follows immediately, that of the ambitious request of the sons of Zebedee. The moment seems an ill-chosen one to be busy with thoughts like these. It was the same when, after the Transfiguration, our Lord had uttered a prophecy of a similar kind. Scarcely had He told them : ' the Son of Man shall be delivered into the hands of men : and they shall . . . kill Him and the third day He shall rise again ' than, as they talked by the way, the twelve began to discuss who should be the greatest among them all. Their only thought was of Christ's glory, and that first share in it that each meant to claim. It was the same spirit that moved the sons of Zebedee now : ' . . . grant to us that we may sit, one on Thy right hand and the other on Thy left hand, in Thy glory ' (Mark x, 37). According to S. Matthew (xx, 21), it is the mother who makes the ambitious request on behalf of her sons : ' Say that these my two sons may sit, the one on Thy right hand, and the other on Thy left, in Thy kingdom.' In both cases the request is represented as in effect coming from the two Apostles, as also in S. Matthew when our Lord replies directly to them. For the rest, the mother's action is probable enough, for she was among those who followed Jesus and ministered to Him (Matt. xxvii, 56).<sup>1</sup>

Possibly besides being called forth by our Lord's prediction of His Resurrection, this request was also prompted by the promise of the twelve thrones (Matt. xix, 28) made not long before the episode in question occurred.

But Jesus brings the two Apostles back to realities : before there could be any question of glory it was necessary to think of the chalice and baptism of suffering, two figures

<sup>1</sup> If we identify Salome as the sister of Mary the Mother of Jesus (*supra*, vol. I, p. 35), we can understand her action better ; as a near relative of Jesus she intervened in favour of her sons, His first cousins. In a somewhat similar way Bethsabee interceded with David in order to secure the royal succession to her son Solomon (3 Kings i, 15).

Although Fr. Lagrange in his *S. Marc* (p. 93) rejects this identification, in commenting on this passage he writes (p. 278) : ' If the two brothers were relatives of our Lord, being accustomed to Eastern laws on the privileges of kinsmen, they probably thought they were within their rights. The whole family would be considered as having " arrived " with that member of it who had risen to power.'

of speech by no means new<sup>1</sup> to the Apostles, and well understood by them.<sup>2</sup> 'Can you drink of the chalice that I drink of?' And on a generous and sincere impulse, not dictated solely by ambition, but also by devotion to Christ, the two brothers answer, 'We can.' It was much the same, a little later, with S. Peter's protestations of fidelity. And our Lord told them that they *should* drink His chalice, an assurance, as we know, literally fulfilled, S. James being put to death at Jerusalem in A.D. 44. As for S. John, those who reject the authenticity of the Fourth Gospel take advantage of our Lord's prediction recorded here, to assert that he too suffered martyrdom, at least before the Synoptic Gospels were compiled. But this is to do violence to history.<sup>3</sup> In any case our Lord's words present no difficulty, even if they are only understood to mean that these two Apostles would share in His sufferings in the same sense as His other disciples.<sup>4</sup>

During this incident of the Zebedee family, the ten stood aside, but they understood what was happening well enough, and were correspondingly annoyed. So Jesus called them and tried to show them wherein true greatness lies. He had given them a similar lesson before, just after the Transfiguration, and on that occasion had set before them, as their model, a little child (Mark ix, 35). But now He supplied them with

<sup>1</sup> The cup of wrath given to Jerusalem by Jehovah : Isa. li, 17, 22 ; Ps. lxxiv, 9 : 'For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup of strong wine full of mixture. And He hath poured it out from this to that : but the dregs thereof are not emptied : all the sinners of the earth shall drink.' Ezech. xxiii, 31 ; Lam. iv, 21 (quoted by Lagrange) : similarly, misfortune was often described as a flood engulfing a man (Ps. xvii, 5 ; xxxi, 6). And it was in this sense that our Lord said : 'I have a baptism wherewith I am to be baptized. And how am I straitened until it be accomplished ?' (Luke xii, 50).

<sup>2</sup> Loisy writes : 'It is very remarkable that the disciples who are represented as not understanding our Lord when He foretells His death in the clearest terms, seem to have no difficulty in doing so, when He speaks in figurative terms.' The surprise here expressed will be greatly diminished if it be taken into consideration that our Lord's plain language in this matter was all the more frightening on account of its very clearness, and that just because they were terrified, the disciples were unwilling to listen or to understand. On the other hand, the traditional metaphors used by Him caused no astonishment since they were already accustomed to them and because their meaning was sufficiently vague.

<sup>3</sup> Cp. L. de Grandmaison, *Jésus Christ*, I, pp. 146-54.

<sup>4</sup> Cp. Mark viii, 34 (let him . . . take up his cross) ; Rom. viii, 17 (if we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified with Him) ; 2 Tim. ii, 11 (if we be dead with Him we shall also live with Him ; if we suffer we shall also reign with him . . .).

a much more touching and forceful example, in short His own; with due restraint reminding them of His coming into the world and of its purpose, namely to serve. It is the great lesson that He would teach them again later on at the Supper, and that would be emphasized by S. John when referring to the fact that 'the Father had given him all things into his hands, and that he came from God and goeth to God' (xiii, 3). So there began to act on the Christian conscience a force destined later to attain such incomparable strength—that of the Imitation of Christ. We find little trace of it in the Sermon on the Mount, for it represents an ideal set by Jesus before those who wish to follow Him more closely than others. He trained His disciples mainly by His daily contact with them, while, from time to time, He expressly called their attention to the need of copying His example in their lives.

More especially do our Lord's last words on this occasion call for notice: 'For the Son of Man also is not come to be ministered to, but to minister and give His life a ransom for many.' The whole dogma of the Redemption lies there. Nor was this sublime thought of redemption through suffering alien from Judaism. Lagrange (*Le Messianisme*, 236) recalls these words of the last of the seven Machabean brothers (2 Mach. vii, 37): 'But I, like my brethren, offer up my life and body for the laws of our fathers: calling upon God to be speedily merciful to our nation . . . but in me and in my brethren the wrath of the Almighty, which hath justly been brought upon all our nations, shall cease!' Or, still more explicitly in the fourth book of the Machabees, 'the seven brothers' were as a ransom for the sins of the people, so that by the blood of these pious men and by their redemptive death, Divine Providence has saved Israel from all the evils that afflicted her.'<sup>1</sup>

We can well imagine that Caiphas had this idea more or less clearly in his mind when, in unconscious prophecy, he made his assertion that it is more expedient to sacrifice one man than the whole people (John xi, 50). And far more than all these, Jesus saw clearly the end to be reached and the price to be paid. All around Him men were still chasing the phantom of a Messias triumphant in a worldly sense. He knew that the Son of Man must suffer, but also that His sufferings would be the salvation of the people.

<sup>1</sup> 4 Mach. xvii, 22, quoted by Swete and Lagrange.

And to-day, for the first time, He appears to have spoken definitely to His apostles on the subject : soon, on the night of the Last Supper, He is to speak to them of it again : ' This is My body, which is given for you ; this is the chalice, the new testament in My blood which shall be shed for you ' ; and the next day He consummated His redemptive sacrifice, already begun.

### III. *Jesus at Jericho.*

At the present day, when we have crossed the torrid and fever-stricken valley of the Jordan and reached the foot of the naked slopes behind which lie Jerusalem, we find it difficult to see in the miserable hamlet of *Er Riha* what is left of the Jericho of our Lord's time, a city of sun and light, like Nice or Cannes to-day. The following is Josephus' description of the district (B.J., IV, 8, 3, 469-473) :

' It can be said with truth that this soil is divine, since it brings forth in abundance the rarest and finest fruits. And, with regard to all the other products of the soil, they can scarcely be equalled in any other climate, so great is the fertility of everything which is put into the ground in this country. The cause of this great fertility seems to me to be the warmth of the air and the great number of streams. This country has such a tropical heat, that it is scarcely possible to go out of doors ; and as for the water, if it be drawn before sunrise, and thereafter be exposed to the air, it becomes exceedingly cold, quite other than the atmosphere which surrounds it ; but, in the winter, the water is tepid, and to bathe in it is a real pleasure. Furthermore, the temperature is then so mild, that, when the rest of Judea is covered with snow, people go out here in linen garments.'

The amenities of a climate like this had attracted Herod the Great, who had built a palace there ; Archelaus lived there, and there was a Roman garrison in the place (B.J., II, xviii, 6). But it was not a Greek town like Tiberias or Phasael ; priests and levites resorted there in large numbers (Luke x, 31) ; and our Lord, who never entered Tiberias, did not avoid Jericho and was willing to accept hospitality from its inhabitants.

Jericho was the last stage in the journey from Perea to



Jerusalem ; and, naturally, our Lord passed through it on His way. The pilgrims were noisy enough and attracted the attention of the citizens, but this was nothing to the excitement caused by the knowledge that Jesus of Nazareth was among them. Bartimeus, the blind man, began to cry out : ' Jesus, son of David, have mercy on me ! ' which was a sign of his faith and of that of those surrounding him ; they believed that it was the Messiah who was passing by ! Here we already have the first murmurs of the enthusiasm of Palm Sunday ; but the disciples are annoyed. The Master, doubtless engaged in teaching those about Him, must not be disturbed in this way. However, all rebukes only increased the persistence of the blind man. Then, as our Lord stopped and called him, the attitude of the crowd is at once changed ; full of expectation they ceased their efforts to suppress Bartimeus' importunity and began to encourage him instead. But there was no need ; ' casting off his garment he leaped up ' and hastened to the Master's side. ' What wilt thou that I should do to thee ? ' an offer royal in its bounty from Him who had all power in heaven and earth in His hands. ' Rabboni, that I may see.' At once his prayer was answered and he ' followed Him in the way,' encircled by a multitude loud in its praises of God.<sup>1</sup> It had been our Lord's custom to enjoin silence upon those whom He cured, but now He makes no attempt to hide the miraculous character of His works or to restrain the enthusiasm of the crowd ; and it was amidst their cries of joy and triumph that He commenced the journey to Jerusalem where He was to die.

As He was passing through Jericho, Jesus noticed a man who had climbed a sycamore tree to get a better view of Him as He passed. We know the familiar words addressed to him by our Lord : ' Zacheus, make haste and come down : for this day I must abide in thy house.'

Zacheus' story is told by S. Luke (xix, 1-10) in a manner so detailed and vivid that it must be graven on the memory of everyone who has read the Gospels at all.<sup>2</sup> When he

<sup>1</sup> Mark x, 46-52 ; Matt. xx, 29-34 ; Luke xxiii, 35-43. The slight variations in the three accounts have no bearing on the identity of the miracle that they relate. Cp. Durand, *S. Mathieu*, p. 336 ; Valensin-Huby, *S. Luc*, p. 332.

<sup>2</sup> Certain points, however, remain obscure. Thus it may be asked : ' Was Zacheus a Jew ? ' The name is Jewish and is found in the Old Testament, its meaning being ' pure.' Further, the Talmud mentions as

knew that Jesus was coming, Zacheus tried in vain to see Him, so taking the means that lay to hand he climbed into a sycamore tree, hoping to get a better view from there. The apparent boldness of this step has been sometimes criticized, and it is certain that among ourselves it would cause astonishment if a receiver-general of customs climbed a tree to see a great man go by. But it must be remembered that in this sort of thing Eastern manners are not so serious and ceremonious as ours, and that such eagerness as Zacheus displayed would not provoke a smile. If there was any particular courage in his action, it was in his showing himself at all to this crowd aflame with enthusiasm, in whose sight he was of ill-favour and even an object of hate. But his reward was to be far beyond anything that he could have hoped. Possibly he had been noticed in the tree, and Jesus may have heard remarks none too kindly passed about him by the crowd. So He calls him: 'Zacheus, make haste and come down: for this day I must abide in thy house.' The word 'must' used by our Lord here is His usual term for denoting some fact in His life that had been definitely determined by His Father's will. So here we have one more mystery of predestination in the fact that this sinner had been designed by Almighty God to be our Lord's host and to be saved by Him.

So Zacheus came down in great haste, to give a glad welcome to our Lord. But then the criticisms begin to make themselves heard. No doubt the rapid conversation

belonging to this very town of Jericho a certain Zacheus who was the father of the famous Rabbi Jochanan ben Zacchai, and we know, in any case, that it was no uncommon thing for a Jew to be employed as a publican. However, a good many Fathers, including Tertullian, S. Chrysostom and S. Cyprian, believed him to be a pagan. This view is less common to-day, but it is defended by Reuss, while Maldonatus regards it as probable; and the word 'sinner' (9) can quite easily denote a pagan. In this case it would be easier to understand the indignation of the Jews (cp. Acts x, 28; xi, 3), and our Lord's reply: '... he also is a son of Abraham' (9), would acquire a new force. Still, we must not dwell too long on an uncertain point. Even if Zacheus were a Jew, we know from S. Matthew's personal history that such visits as Jesus paid here were odious to the Jews; and this feeling would very likely be stronger in Jericho where there were so many priests, while Zacheus' own rank and wealth would serve to emphasize the significance of the step taken by our Lord.

A further question is whether Zacheus' statement about his deeds of restitution and almsgiving refers to what was already his custom or to a new resolution taken at the moment. S. Cyprian, followed by Godet, takes the former view, but it does not seem a very probable one; vv. 9 and 10 show that up to then Zacheus had been a sinner and that it was our Lord's coming that saved him.

between the two was only audible to those who were quite near, but everyone saw Jesus entering the house of a publican and sinner, and a murmur of indignation passed through the whole crowd. And so it appeared that our Lord's constant teaching had not succeeded in winning over public opinion to His side. The pharisaical instinct was too strong, and it put the publican among those with whom one did not take a meal. And Zacheus felt this almost at once. So, coming to his guest he told Him the resolution he had made, including much almsgiving and restitution 'four-fold.' We are reminded of the law laid down in Exodus xxii, 1 : 'If any man steal an ox or a sheep, and kill or sell it, he shall restore five oxen for one ox, and four sheep for one sheep. . . . If that which he stole be found with him, either ox, or ass, or sheep, he shall restore double.' It is clear that only in special cases was fourfold restitution for stolen goods envisaged by the law ; restitution twofold and fivefold being contemplated in other cases. Consequently it was no legal consideration that dictated Zacheus' conduct on this occasion, but the desire to make ample reparation for all the wrongs he may have caused.

And this was his salvation. We know on our Lord's own authority that it is more difficult for a rich man to be saved than for a camel to pass through the needle's eye ; yet here is a rich man, whose fortune seems, partly at least, to have been ill-gotten, securing his salvation by amply satisfying the rights of justice and by an abundant giving of alms. And the fact only confirms what we have said more than once about the alleged Ebionitism of S. Luke. We are not told that Zacheus made himself poor or that he got rid of all his goods : and yet salvation enters his home. It follows that entire self-spoliation is not an essential condition of salvation.

This converted publican will always be dear to Christian piety, and in the Clementine Homilies (iii, 63) we find him as S. Peter's companion and afterwards Bishop of Cæsarea. It is only a legend, and there seems no reason for us to improve upon the vivid light thrown by the Gospels on the wealthy publican of Jericho.

It was while He sat at Zacheus' table that Jesus spoke a parable for the benefit of His fellow-guests, in which He strove to dissipate some of their illusions about the Kingdom of God, at the same time showing them something of His

own part in the Divine Plan.<sup>1</sup> S. Luke tells us that these people were expecting the immediate manifestation of the kingdom of God, nor is it difficult to understand the source of this impatient anticipation of that event. Jesus, who for so long had kept Himself in the background, was now on His way to Jerusalem to celebrate the Pass-over, and everyone felt that the final struggle between Him and the chiefs of the people was inevitable and close at hand. No one, in the enthusiastic crowd following Him on His journey, could tolerate for a single moment the thought that this struggle was to end in His death; while the murmurs that had followed His entry into Zacheus' house proved that the Jews had discarded none of their prejudices: according to them, the kingdom belonged to the true children of Abraham; to the holy and the pure. And these claims, which nothing would induce them to forgo, they were ready to stake on the person of Christ Himself. After all the other miracles that they had witnessed, here was the cure of the blind man: surely none could resist a wonder-worker such as this? No doubt our Lord had told them more than once that His power was not at the service of their dreams: but these were hard words which they would not hear. And when at last their illusions were shattered by His death, everything seemed lost: 'We hoped that it was He that should have redeemed Israel.' Still, our Lord would warn them once again, at the same time showing them something of His own function, of the opposition He would encounter and of the punishment reserved for His determined foes (Luke xix, 12-27).

The theme that He chose to convey this lesson was the undertaking of a man of high birth who went into a far country to receive for himself the investiture of a kingdom. In this connection all the commentators recall the history of Archelaus. 'Everyone on the spot,' says Fr. Ollivier,<sup>2</sup> 'could easily see the palace rebuilt by Archelaus, twenty-five years before, after the fire started by Simon, rebel slave of the first Herod. Our Lord's eyes would have rested on the high marble walls, and as His heart went out to this people

<sup>1</sup> 'As they were hearing these things, He added and spoke a parable, because He was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately be manifested' (Luke xix, 11).

<sup>2</sup> Ollivier, *Revue biblique*, I (1892), pp. 592 ff.

who were dreaming of the restoration of David's kingdom to the prince so lately fallen from the usurped throne of the Asmoneans, He allowed His hearers to see something of the anguish that the thought of Israel's approaching ruin, intensified by these sad memories, brought to His soul. A groan ran through the crowd at the thought of this man whose ambition seemed justified by his high birth, but who was in no way of royal descent and who had to supplicate for the very right to assume a crown.' No doubt this is all very vividly expressed, but I doubt if such pointed allusions were really worthy of Christ ; and for the rest, all petty sovereigns of the East were in the same position as Archelaus himself.<sup>1</sup> The princes of Chalcis, Abilene, Commagene and Damascus all had to receive their investiture from Rome. It was in no way the sign of an inordinate ambition meeting its reward, but the consequence of the subjection of all nations to the Roman power. In 40 B.C. Herod the Great had himself gone to Rome to secure the revision of the decision of the senate by which Antigonus was made king of Judea (A.J., XIV, vii, 3 ; B.J., I, xiv, 4). Again in 4 B.C. Archelaus took the same step to obtain the confirmation of the disposition of his father's will, by which he became king, and the Jews had sent a deputation of fifty representatives to request that Judea should be administered directly by Rome ; the result being that Augustus refused Archelaus the title of king, but gave him that of tetrach instead. A little later Antipas, in his turn, went to Rome to demand the royal crown, and suffered banishment for his pains. Such events were frequent in those days, and, in alluding to them, Jesus was not satirizing the misfortunes of a fallen prince ; rather, He was reminding His hearers of a subjection of which He had had only too much experience among men ; and upon this background He unfolded to them His position in relation to Almighty God and His mission in the world.

The interpretation of the parable is easy enough. The nobleman is Christ Himself, who had come into a far country to receive the formal recognition of His reign over men. This long journey denotes less the distance traversed than the period during which He was absent from home. We are conscious here of the teaching that, according to S. Luke, our Lord wished to give His hearers. All around

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Fonck, *Parabeln*, p. 631.

Him men were expecting the imminent appearance of the kingdom of God : but they were mistaken, there would be long delays yet. The King must first go away for a long time ; then He would return invested with the insignia of His kingship.

And there is another lesson to be drawn from the parable. The opposition around Him was growing more menacing every day. There were many who wanted neither Him nor His rule. At present He would only bow before their hatred, but later, when He returns, it will be His turn to punish. And the parable ends on this terrible note : ‘ But as for those my enemies, who would not have me reign over them, bring them hither and kill them before me.’

And in forty years’ time the storm thus predicted would break over Jerusalem, the Holy City, and Christ’s enemies by hundreds and thousands would be massacred in the Temple which had been their pride, and which was to be their tomb. In this prediction of the last things we can already see traces of something that will appear more clearly still in the discourse at Jerusalem : the second coming of Christ in His avenging power will not take place until the end of time ; but we have its prelude already in the destruction of Jerusalem, at once a presage and an anticipation on a small scale of the end of the world.

This long journey of the king, with the hostility that pursued him, his return and final vengeance, are features that form a picture, and convey a lesson in themselves. But side by side with this parable we have a second, that of the ‘ pounds.’ Before the king’s departure he had deposited his money in trust to his servants and, on his return, demanded an account of its use. To this second part of the parable corresponds that of the talents<sup>1</sup> recorded in S. Matthew (xxv, 14-30). A man goes a long journey and hands over to his servants five talents, two, and one talent respectively, and at his return demands an account of what had been entrusted to their care. The two first have put their talents out at interest and have doubled the amount entrusted to them, but the third has left his unproductive. The two first are congratulated and permitted to enter

<sup>1</sup> Maldonatus had already written (on Matt. xxv) : ‘ It is scarcely probable that Christ would have repeated the same parable twice under different forms, within an interval of only a few days. Luke has related it in a setting of time and place that differs from that in Matthew, but it is

into the joy of their Lord while the third is cast into outer darkness, his talent being taken from him and given to him that had ten.

Christ Himself is going away and for a long time, a statement recorded both in S. Matthew and S. Luke. This point ought not to be lost sight of when we are considering the question of the Second Coming and the expectation of Christ. The faithful in their easily-understood impatience, moreover supported in this respect by Jewish aspirations as well, may hope that a return so ardently desired will be delayed but a short time ; but our Lord Himself has warned us that we shall have to wait for His coming, in words that are graven in the Gospel text.

But during the long time of waiting, the Master is aware of the use made of the trust He has left in His servants' hands. This is the lesson that stands out most clearly in both parables. In both we have two groups—the industrious servants who have made the most of the money they have received in trust, and the unenterprising and lazy ones who have buried it out of sight. In the first group we have several depositaries with unequal amounts left in their care, but who have made equally praiseworthy efforts to turn them to good account, with similar good results, and receiving a similar reward. This equality of rewards is especially stressed in S. Matthew, where each receives the same invitation to enter into their Master's joy. In S. Luke's version the reward is proportionate to the yield from the money left in trust, at least in the sense that it increases with it, but it is incomparably greater than its absolute value, a gain of ten 'pounds' being rewarded by the governorship of a whole province—a faint reflection of the difference between our poor efforts and their heavenly reward. And it should be noted that this reward does not consist in

no strange thing that the evangelists should differ in these respects, once we grasp that they are concerned with essentials of fact and not with their order or date. We must therefore believe that Christ spoke this parable before His entry into Jerusalem. This is asserted by Luke and while Matthew is silent he does not contradict the fact. . . . So far as the text of the parable is concerned we may believe that Matthew has recorded our Lord's words more exactly than S. Luke. He was present himself and, in any case, his record seems the clearer of the two.'

These remarks of Maldonatus seem to me to be just. The differences of detail between the two parables are manifold, but the resemblance is so strong as to make probable the original unity of the parable. Certainly it is clearer and easier to follow in Matthew's version. However, we take it here at the point where it is inserted by Luke.

a kind of honourable retirement characterized by repose, but in still greater activity, implying rule over others with redoubled responsibility, if also with the joy of the Lord. Nor do the two aspects exclude each other. Heaven is not a place of restraint and inaction, but of more intense activity than before. Even on earth, activity is not measured by external effort, by occupations of a more or less absorbing kind ; at this rate, it would often be the most energetic who most developed their interior life. On the contrary, true activity is the intimate life of the soul, checked by so many things here below, but destined to expand in heaven by participation in the very life of God Himself. If this be understood we shall not expect, like the English author Plummer, to find here an intimation of an indefinite succession of many lives and probationary states. This present life decides our future, but it leads to a new life and not to effortless repose.

Opposed to this group of active servants we find in both parables the sullen and defiant figure of the man who had secured the pound in his girdle, or buried his talent in the earth, his sole excuse being that his master is a hard man ; clearly showing that his idleness was inspired by a spirit of injured pharisaism. Only one thing mattered and that was, not to run any risk ; but our Lord's reply expressed His condemnation of a calculating spirit, barren in itself and insulting to Almighty God. Quite other is the attitude of mind that He expects His servants to show. They must work for God with confidence and zeal, not contenting themselves with saying to their Master on His return, 'Behold, here is Thy pound,' but hoping like the others to tell Him with modesty and yet with honest pride : 'Thy money hath doubled in my hands.' And the love implied in this attitude to our Lord will rest also on the confidence with which they serve a master of whose goodness they are well assured ; it will be their assurance against the risks they may run in their efforts to do their best. A similar lesson is found in the words : 'Be ye good bankers,' attributed by several ancient writers to our Lord (*Agrapha*, II).

And this parable has yet another truth to teach, namely that God's gifts and the talents He has entrusted to us cannot remain unproductive without being lost ; that whoever buries them out of sight destroys them, for all practical purposes, by that very act ; that they cannot be



preserved except by being turned to good account and developed so far as opportunity permits.

Our Lord, in this parable, does not bring on the scene those who dissipated the treasure entrusted to them with a light heart, or who developed it to the detriment of the Master who had confided it to their care. Of them He says not one word ; but it may well be asked what the fate of the fraudulent depositary will be, if the merely idle one is treated in so severe a way ?

The last sentence of the parable is full of teaching for us all : ‘ . . . to everyone that hath shall be given . . . and from him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken from him ’ (Luke xix, 26).. When the Master commanded the idle talent to be given to him who already had ten, the bystanders were astonished, but He answered them in the above words, which we have already met with on our Lord’s lips when He was explaining to His Apostles the principles underlying the interpretation of His parables (*ibid.* viii, 18). On that occasion He made them understand how the Jews, blind and deaf, could not but become spiritually poorer and poorer, while the Apostles, because they were already rich in the secrets of the Gospel, were bound to become richer still. Here we have a similar lesson but of wider scope. He who is without possessions loses what he already has, a truth that applies in many different departments of life—fortune, knowledge, influence and the rest, and is especially true in the realm of spiritual goods. God’s friends, those who are generous towards Him and have risked for His sake all that they possess, will see these possessions unceasingly multiplying in their hands, while others are stripped of theirs more and more as the days go by. This is the inexorable law of life, but it is also the Will of our Heavenly Father, who is more pleased with the heights of sanctity reached by one of His servants than He is displeased with the unfaithfulness of a whole multitude.

## CHAPTER V

THE LAST WEEK. THE ANOINTING AT BETHANIA. PALM SUNDAY. DISCUSSIONS IN THE TEMPLE. THE CONSUMMATION OF THE WORLD

### *I. The Anointing at Bethania.*

AT Jericho, our Lord mingled with the crowd of pilgrims going up to Jerusalem, but before entering the Holy City He separated Himself from them in order to make a halt at Bethania.<sup>1</sup> This was on Sunday, such a journey having been impossible on the previous day, the Jewish Sabbath. Jesus' friends at Bethania had decided to give a party in His honour, and all the more because of the debt of gratitude they owed Him, and of the danger that they knew threatened Him only too closely. The guests met at the house of Simon the Leper, a personage otherwise unknown to us, although it has been supposed that he was the father of Lazarus and his two sisters. He is not mentioned in S. John's account, although even there Lazarus is introduced rather as a guest than as the master of the house. Martha and Mary appear just as we know them already: Martha full of external activity, Mary giving herself in utter devotion, more superbly expressed than ever before. Some of the purest spikenard, doubtless imported from the Indies, was preserved in a flask, hermetically sealed. She breaks open the alabaster

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxvi, 6-13; Mark xiv, 3-9; John xii, 1-10. According to Matthew and Mark, the meal in Simon the Leper's house at Bethania was immediately followed by Judas' step of seeking an interview with the Sanhedrin in order to betray Jesus. The juxtaposition of the two incidents explains why this narrative is placed just before the betrayal, instead of being found, as in S. John, before the entry into Jerusalem. On the connection between the anointing at Bethania and that which Jesus received from S. Mary Magdalene in the Pharisee's house, cp. Fr. Lemonnyer in *Mélanges Grandmaison, Recherches de Science Religieuse*, 1928, pp. 105-17; and Bernard, *S. John*, pp. 409-13. These authors—and especially the second—make the most of the reasons for identifying not the two anointings but the two central figures—Mary Magdalene and Mary of Bethania. Their reasons are strong but the objections on the other side are not without force. Cp. Lagrange, *L'Évangile de Jésus Christ*, pp. 160 ff.; and *supra*, vol. I, p. 219, note 1.

flask ; the oil, a pound's weight of it, enormous for so precious a substance, begins to flow, and Mary pours it first on our Lord's head. This was a usual mark of greeting and respect which, however, the Pharisee in S. Luke's story had refused to Jesus (Luke vii, 46). But immediately afterwards she poured the rest of the substance on our Lord's feet, wiping them with her hair, thus giving expression to her veneration and gratitude by a prodigality and a salutation of so exceptional a kind. The whole house was filled with the odour of the spikenard, and Judas made his famous protest. He is not named by the Synoptics, who seem to imply that some of the other disciples were associated with his action on this occasion. Perhaps we need not see more in this than a peculiarity of S. Matthew's style, but it may well be that we have here a trace of the sinister influence of Judas, as already beginning to affect the other Apostles.

The ground of his complaint may seem specious enough. 'Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence and given to the poor?' There will always be those who, in their wisdom, criticize generous gifts made in God's service on the pretext of care for the poor, and in this case the sum involved was considerable—three hundred pence—and Judas would only ask thirty pieces for betraying our Lord. Mary herself kept silence as in the incident recorded in Luke x, 41 (cp. Luke vii, 40), but this time our Lord Himself assumed the defence of one whose only thought was for Him and who had no idea of defending herself. Judas could see nothing in her action but a piece of useless waste, but in our Lord's eyes it was an act of homage to His Sacred Body and a kind of anticipation of its embalming after death.<sup>1</sup> Then, perfumes and precious substances would be used without stint and without comment, and, practically, it should be the same now, with His death so near—a touching allusion for all present and, one would think, a peculiarly piercing one for Judas, since this death was to be his work ; but he remained unmoved, suffering only from his outraged

<sup>1</sup> John xii, 7 : 'Let her alone, that she may keep it against the day of my burial.' Bernard (pp. 413, 421) observes that these words can be more easily understood if Mary of Bethania is identified with Mary Magdalene. In all four evangelists we find Mary Magdalene at the tomb of Christ ; nor, apart from the present passage, is she ever called Mary of Bethania. 'Thus she who began His *ἐνταφιασμός* by anointing the Lord's feet in Bethany, was among the women who finished the anointing of His body eight days later.'

greed. And our Lord adds :<sup>1</sup> 'Amen, I say to you, where-soever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, that also which she hath done shall be told for a memory of her'—a striking prophecy indeed and one that is fulfilled daily under our very eyes ; a sublime reward, covering the generosity of a moment with a glory that shall penetrate everywhere, and last for ever.

It is easier to imagine than to analyse Mary's emotion at hearing such words as these. Once more she felt the joy of being defended by Christ, her soul full of wondering love at this superb promise half-revealing infinite horizons before her eyes. Yet she is more moved still at the thought of our Lord's approaching death. Like the Apostles, and doubtless more than they, she felt its nearness and groaned in spirit, but then as always she kept silence, waited and loved.

## II. *The Traitor Judas.*

Meanwhile Judas was on the point of betraying his Lord. It may be asked why Jesus, who knew him through and through, should have entrusted him with the common purse, thus, apparently, putting him in an occasion of sin. But when he was first called, Judas was not unworthy of the confidence placed in him by Christ, who made him one of the twelve and gave him all the helps by which he might become an Apostle and a saint. It was then that He, or perhaps the little community as a whole, chose him for this position of trust, for which, possibly, he was fitted by past experience. In a matter like this our Lord did not wish to use His foreknowledge, in spite of the suffering that it brought Him ; and He would not treat the Apostle who was to betray Him differently from the rest. In fact, Judas had already been lost to Him for a whole year ; the first hint we have of the situation coming to us from S. John (vi, 70), when Christ's refusal to be made a king after the miracle of the five thousand had been a severe blow to the ambitious Jews, and, no doubt, particularly so to Judas ; the discourse on the Bread of Life had completed his alienation from his Master, and, at the end of this day, when Peter answers : 'Lord, to whom shall we go ? Thou hast the words of eternal life. Jesus says to him, 'Have I not chosen you twelve ? And one of you is a devil.' And the evangelist

<sup>1</sup> According to Matthew and Mark.

adds : ' Now He meant Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon : for this same was about to betray Him, whereas he was one of the twelve.'

None of the Apostles had understood this warning at the time, and a year had passed without any suspicion of the true facts of the case arising, and this in a small community of men in daily contact with each other, and among whom jealousy was by no means unknown. From these facts we can gather something of the patience and discretion exercised by our Blessed Lord. Nor did He abandon the fallen Apostle without any effort to save him from himself, as many warnings against the dangers of riches, of the sin of hypocrisy and the betrayal of confidence remain to prove. So we read in Luke xii, 1-2 : ' Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy, for there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed ; nor hidden that shall not be known ' ; and again in xvi, 11, 12 : ' If then you have not been faithful in the unjust mammon, who will trust you with that which is the true ? And if you have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own ? ' All these warnings, and many others on how difficult it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of heaven, acquire still greater force when we reflect that it was in Judas' presence that our Lord spoke such words. And the traitor listened, annoyed or indifferent, and went on turning the small resources of the Apostolic band to his own use. Meanwhile, Jesus' danger became ever greater and Judas saw the fair hope of a brilliant future by which he had been attracted, little by little fading away. Decidedly, things were going wrong and he must withdraw from the ill-starred adventure, taking with him what he could. The anointing at Bethania was only one incident among others ; it decided Judas, and soon after he went to the chief priests.

The fact of our Lord's presence at Bethania was soon known in Jerusalem, whose inhabitants flocked in crowds to see Him and Lazarus whom He had raised from the dead. Confronted with this situation the Jewish leaders, for the present, held their peace. In fact their impotence was only emphasized by the proclamation recently issued in their name ; they had forbidden the people to go after Christ, and now He is at the gates of Jerusalem, the centre of a multitude drawn from every side ; and yet they are not taking any further steps. It is the same hatred—cowardly

and futile, but more violent—that our Lord encountered at the Feast of Tabernacles, when the people asked (John vii, 25): ‘Is not this He whom they seek to kill? And behold He speaketh openly, and they say nothing to Him. Have the rulers known for a truth that this is the Christ?’ To escape from this embarrassment the chief priests decided to bring about Lazarus’ death as well, but all their consultations failed to meet the difficulty as to how to seize either Jesus or Lazarus in the midst of an enthusiastic crowd. Judas’ treason and the snare of Gethsemane were soon to solve the problem. But the time had not come yet, nor the ‘power of darkness’; there were still several hours to run and Christ was going to use them to complete His work.

### III. *The Triumphal Entry.*

Our Lord’s triumphal entry into Jerusalem is recorded by all four evangelists,<sup>1</sup> but certain features separate the account of the Synoptics from that of S. John. The three first evangelists describe the event with greater detail, omitting, however, the halt at Bethania. If they stood by themselves, we should have thought that Jesus came straight from Jericho with the crowd of pilgrims and passed on without stopping at Bethphage and Bethania at all; while S. John gives only a very brief account, but by including the incident of the anointing at Bethania he makes the entry into Jerusalem itself easier to understand. Already, the evening before, a great number of people had come from Jerusalem to Bethania to see Jesus and Lazarus, and now that it is known that the Master is coming into Jerusalem, these visitors of the previous evening put the whole place into a state of ferment and a triumphal entry is arranged.

In the preceding year, when the Galilean crowd wished to make Him a king, Jesus had escaped from their hands (John vi, 15); but now He no longer refuses this act of homage. It was fitting that He should act, at least once, publicly as the Messiah, but He would do it in the humblest possible way.<sup>2</sup> It is clear, too, from S. John’s account that the

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxi, 1–11; Mark xi, 1–11; Luke xix, 28–38; John xii, 12–16.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. Lagrange, *S. Marc*, 292: ‘Jesus was in truth the promised Messiah, but since He was not the sort of Messiah of whom the people dreamed, before He publicly manifested Himself He waited for a moment when He would no longer run the risk of being drawn into a mad adventure, at the very gates of Jerusalem and under the eyes of the Roman authorities themselves. Still, it was His duty to present Himself as the Messiah so

disciples' action was not dictated by any thought of prophecy ; it was only later that they observed that such an entry upon an ass had been foretold. But our Lord thought of it and guided His Apostles in this direction, sending two of them, presumably Peter and John, to loose the animal, showing, by the instructions He gave, at once His supernatural knowledge, His discretion and His empire over souls. The owner of the beast, who lent it at the first request, was, doubtless, like the master of the Cenacle, a secret disciple, unknown to the Apostles themselves.

Our Lord's wish to detach Himself a little from the crowd shows that, for once, He had consented to receive its homage, and to place Himself, so to speak, in the centre of the stage. For the first time the people felt their enthusiasm welcomed by Christ Himself and responded with greater fervour still. The Apostles cast their garments upon the ass, which, no doubt, was unsaddled since no one had yet ridden upon it, while others from further afield spread theirs upon the road ; some cut down green branches and strewed them in the way, while others again, carrying palms in their hand, formed a procession in honour of the Son of David.<sup>1</sup>

As they advanced, the crowd became denser and more had refused the title for Himself. So our Lord chose a mode of entry that the Jews should not allege that they could not accept as such one who incontestably Messianic, since it fulfilled one of the clearest of the Messianic texts (Zach. ix, 9), but at the same time one of the most modest that could be conceived. He allowed Himself to be acclaimed, in a sense He invited it, by adopting the guise that the prophet had described. But the simplicity as dwelt on by the prophet and now realized by Himself ought to have made it clear that He had not come to establish a temporal kingdom or one of a kind likely to uselessly provoke the vigilance of the Romans.

<sup>1</sup> Similar proceedings took place at the enthronement of Jehu : ' Then they made haste and taking every man his garment laid it under his feet after the manner of a judgement seat. And they sounded the trumpet and said : " Jehu is king "' (4 Kings ix, 13). Or again at the entry of Simon Machabeus into Jerusalem : ' And they entered into it the three and twentieth day of the second month, in the year one hundred and seventy-one, with thanksgiving and branches of palm trees, and harps and cymbals and psalteries and hymns and canticles because the great enemy was destroyed out of Israel ' (1 Mach. xiii, 51).

We may also compare our Lord's entry into Jerusalem to the triumphal entries of kings of which the authors of antiquity have left us numerous descriptions, collected by Erik Peterson, *Die Einholung des Kyrios, Zeitschrift für systematische Theologie*, 1929, pp. 682-702 : for example, Vespasian's entry into Rome (Josephus, B.J., VII, 4, 1, 68-71) or Titus' into Antioch (*ibid.*, 5, 2, 100-103). Such a comparison throws into relief the religious character of our Lord's entry, with little of the pomp of imperial triumphs, but capable of arousing enthusiasm of an infinitely deeper kind.

enthusiastic still : ' And when He was now coming near the descent of Mount Olivet, the whole multitude of His disciples began with joy to praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen,<sup>1</sup> crying : Blessed be the king who cometh in the name of the Lord ! Peace in heaven and glory on high ' (Luke xix, 37, 38), words that recalled the Angels' song at Bethlehem ; a touching coincidence marking the unity of our Lord's life and uniting the manger to the cross. But above all bursts forth the Messianic pæan : ' Hosanna to the Son of David ! Blessed be the reign of our father David that cometh ! Blessed be He that cometh in the name of the Lord, the King of Israel ! ' There could be no doubt of the burning enthusiasm of these people, but it was ill-informed and national rather than religious in character. In our Lord's ears their cries of fervour had a painful sound : they seemed already mingled with the ' Tolle, crucifige ! ' of a few hours later on.

As the procession entered the city the fervour of the crowd redoubled. ' And when He was come into Jerusalem the whole city was moved, saying : Who is this ? And the people said : This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth of Galilee ' (Matt. xxi, 10, 11). The flame of enthusiasm spread from one quarter to another until it took possession of the whole town. The Pharisees felt themselves defeated. ' Do you see that we prevail nothing ? Behold, the whole world is gone after Him ' (John xii, 19). We have reached the supreme crisis in that growth of opinion favourable to our Lord described by S. John, especially from the Feast of Tabernacles onward. Then the admirers of Jesus could scarcely utter more than a timid whisper ; now the air is full of their cries of salutation and joy.

But the annoyance of the Pharisees was only increased and since they could do nothing to silence the crowd, they appealed to Jesus Himself to intervene : ' Master, rebuke Thy disciples. To whom He said : I say to you that if these shall hold their peace, these stones will cry out ' (Luke xix, 39, 40). In this way the Temple was reached and our Lord inspects it somewhat in the same way that a

<sup>1</sup> Among these miracles, John makes more explicit mention of the raising of Lazarus : ' The multitude therefore gave testimony, which was with Him, when He called Lazarus out of the grave, and raised him from the dead. For which reason also the people came to meet Him, because they heard that He had done this miracle ' (xii, 17, 18).



master might examine the state of his house which had been thrown into disorder by unfaithful servants. Meanwhile the blind and the lame continued to approach Him and were cured, the cries of the people waxing stronger, as also the indignation of the chief priests and scribes, who : ' . . . Seeing the wonderful things that He did, and the children crying in the temple and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David, were moved with indignation, and said to Him : Hearst Thou what these say ? And Jesus said to them : Yea, have you never read : Out of the mouth of infants and of sucklings thou hast perfected praise ? ' (Matt. xxi, 14-16).

Ever since the beginning of our Lord's ministry we have felt the jealousy of His opponents gradually working, silently at first, but more and more openly as the months passed by. Now, confronted with the triumph of this first Palm Sunday, it bursts forth. Surely, the whole thing was a scandal and a piece of arrant folly. There were the Romans in the Antonia, from whence they looked out on the Temple ; what would they think of a demonstration like this in the heart of the city and on the eve of the Passover itself !

Such pretexts but ill concealed their bitter contempt and pride ; and Jesus putting all this aside came to the defence of His disciples. Once more the Good Shepherd is ready to shield His little flock, as formerly when, as they plucked the ears of corn, His disciples were accused of breaking the Sabbath ; or when at His two anointings He defended the Magdalen against the Pharisees and Mary against Judas. No more, on this occasion, will He disown His followers and the children who greet Him as He comes, while He reminds the Pharisees of the eighth psalm, dear to Him because of its allusion to the Son of man 'made a little less than the angels.' Surely then this were fitting homage to the Son of God as He enters Jerusalem : and if men 'held their peace, the very stones would cry out.' None the less, in the midst of this enthusiasm, infecting the whole town and disconcerting His enemies, Jesus never lost sight of His approaching Passion, and these intimate thoughts of His are revealed in two incidents, related respectively by S. Luke and S. John, and betraying the poignant grief that lay hidden amid the glory of His triumph.

' And when He drew near, seeing the city, He wept over it, saying : If thou also hadst known, and that in

this thy day, the things that are to thy peace : but now they are hidden from thy eyes. For the days shall come upon thee : and thy enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and straiten thee on every side. And beat thee flat to the ground, and thy children who are in thee : and they shall not leave in thee a stone upon a stone : because thou hast not known the time of thy visitation.' (Luke xix, 41-44.)

We cannot, even to-day, descend from the Mount of Olives in the direction of Jerusalem, without recalling these tears of Christ. The Crusaders raised a chapel here under the name of *Dominus flevit*, traces of which have been preserved to our own time, while on the northern side, towards the Scopus, are the remains of the entrenchment foretold by Christ, the constraint of whose dread presence was to stifle Jerusalem, reduce it to the most frightful famine, until temple, ramparts, palaces, all should fall together in the final assault. And amidst the salutations that greeted Him on every hand Jesus paused for an instant to weep. We are tempted to repeat here, concerning His attitude to the Holy City and its people, the remark made at the tomb of Lazarus : ' Behold, how He loved him,' while some might be inclined to add : ' Could not He who cured the man born blind, and raised Lazarus from the dead, have saved this race from its impending doom ? ' It is the dread mystery of human freedom, capable of drawing to its ruin a nation so beloved of God that He was about to give for it His own life !

The special value of this incident is that it shows us our Lord's true state of mind at the time of His entry into Jerusalem. When we see Him not only encouraging but inspiring the triumphant demonstrations of which He was the object, superficial readers might think that He was carried away, like the crowd, by an access of Messianic enthusiasm. But all such illusions as to our Lord's motives melt away as we behold His tears. He was willing, indeed, to be recognized as the Messiah—for He was that—but even at a moment like this His Messiaship remained entirely religious in character, and in no way political like the conception of the Messiah that had intoxicated the minds of the Jews. It was this conception that He felt everywhere around Him, without being able to dissipate it, that so afflicted His

spirit. It was the fatal illusion, destined to-morrow to bring about His own death and before long the ruin of His people.<sup>1</sup>

Apparently it was during this entry into Jerusalem<sup>2</sup> that there occurred another incident, still more moving, which is recorded by S. John (xii, 20-36). Some Greeks who were in Jerusalem for the Passover approached S. Philip with the request : ' . . . we would see Jesus,' which Philip passes on to Andrew, and both Apostles go to Jesus Himself. And our Lord, with His mind fixed on that Will of His Father in which He could see every stage of His life foreknown and foreordained, answered : ' The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified.' But this glory could be none other than the fruit of His own death.

' Amen, amen, I say to you, unless the grain of wheat falling into the ground die, itself remaineth alone. But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it : and he that hateth his life in this world, keepeth it unto life eternal.' (John xii, 24-25.)

These terrible words had resounded more than once in the Apostles' ears<sup>3</sup> and our Lord had always applied to Himself the severe law that He imposed on all His disciples : each must carry his cross, but He had gone before them all, and they had only to follow Him. And now the hour was come ; the grain of corn was about to fall into the earth and die ; yet this grain was the very bread of life come down from heaven.

<sup>1</sup> Reuss writes : ' He does not allow Himself to be carried away by deceitful hopes as to the moral tendencies of the people, still less as to their political dreams. Intoxicated with joy and hailing the coming of the Son of David they let pass this last day of respite when they could still follow Him into the only way of salvation in this day of their visitation (Luke i, 68) and when Almighty God is giving them the opportunity of assuring their future, wasting it in futile demonstrations and in pre-occupations vainer still. They can go on dreaming of political restoration and thus put the seal on their own ruin. Salvation does not lie that way, nor can the kingdom be of this world.'

<sup>2</sup> Cp. Lagrange and Bernard, *in hoc loco*. Both these writers connect the incident with the entry into Jerusalem ; but in *L'Evangile de Jésus Christ*, p. 429, Fr. Lagrange transfers it to the evening of the same day. This difference is unimportant.

<sup>3</sup> After S. Peter's confession (Mark viii, 35 ; Matt. xvi, 25 ; Luke ix, 24), and in the warnings given to the disciples (Matt. x, 39 ; Luke xvii, 33).

And in face of this death, terrible and imminent, our Lord was 'troubled':

'Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour. But for this cause I came unto this hour. Father, glorify Thy name. A voice therefore came from heaven: I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.' (John xii, 27-28.)

In the midst of His triumph the agony was already upon Him, and the prayer in the garden on His lips: 'Remove this chalice from me:' but also there was the same will, unchangeably directed to the glorification of the Father. And the Father Himself, who in the garden will reply by sending an angel, here answers by a voice from heaven: 'I have both glorified . . . (My name) and will glorify it again.'

The people heard the voice but without distinguishing the words;<sup>1</sup> but still it was for their sakes that it was heard at all. And Jesus interpreted it for them:

'Now is the judgement of the world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to Myself.' (31-32.)

The Jews, who only half understood our Lord's words, gave vent to their mystification: 'We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever. And how sayest thou: The Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?' But Jesus, without lingering over the discussion, continued to press the main issue upon His hearers: 'Yet a little while the light is among you. Walk whilst you have the light, that the darkness overtake you not . . . believe in the light, that you may be the children of light.' 'And He went away and hid Himself from them' (xii, 35-36).

Thus ends S. John's account of this triumphal day, and the evangelist pauses dumbfounded before such moral blindness as the Jews displayed. 'Whereas He had done so many miracles before them, they believed not in Him.' Yet this was nothing but the fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy: 'Lord, who hath believed our hearing? And to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed.' This great mystery of the unbelief of the Jews was before the prophet's eyes even

<sup>1</sup> It was the same with S. Paul's companions on the road to Damascus (Acts ix, 7; cp. xxii, 9).

while he contemplated the glory of the Son of God.<sup>1</sup> However, even in so apparently incredulous a company as this, there were concealed some timid believing souls and that among 'the chief men'; 'but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, that they might not be cast out of the synagogue; for they loved the glory of men more than the glory of God' (xii, 42). The flagging courage of these weak disciples would soon be fortified by Christ's death and the outpouring of the Holy Ghost; when these seeds of faith would shoot up and ripen, while the Apostles would reap in joy what their Master had sown in tears.

#### IV. *The Barren Fig-tree.*

Jesus, whose life was in danger in Jerusalem, withdrew on the Sunday evening to Bethania, which He was also to do on each of the next few days. The next morning when He left Bethania, being hungry, and seeing in the distance a fig-tree, He approached it to see if He could find any fruit there, and this proving not to be the case, 'He said to it: May no man hereafter eat fruit of thee any more for ever.' That evening, when they passed that way, our Lord and His Apostles found the fig-tree 'dried up from the roots' (Mark xi, 12-14, 20 ff.).

Many commentators have—perversely—found a veritable stumbling-block in this miracle.<sup>2</sup> But it was not in any sense our Lord's purpose to demonstrate His power to His disciples, still less to visit His wrath upon a tree. His whole

<sup>1</sup> It will be noticed how, in this passage of S. John's Gospel, the subject of the great theophany of Isa. vi, 1 is the Son of God. We have already met this same passage of Isaias in the Synoptics (*supra*, vol. I, p. 248) and recalled S. Paul's reference to it. (Acts, xxviii, 26 ff.)

<sup>2</sup> Thus so early a critic as Reuss writes (p. 557): 'The story of the fig-tree is an inscrutable enigma. These trees are very common in Palestine, producing their first fruit before the leaves, and continuing to ripen until the end of the season. As early as Easter, however, they have as yet no fruit fit to be eaten, a fact that Mark has been at pains to observe here. . . . Since it is difficult to persuade ourselves that Jesus could have felt any need to demonstrate His power to His disciples, who would have never dreamt of doubting it, and since it is scarcely less difficult to believe that He would have vented His anger upon a tree, we are naturally led to suppose that there is here some error in the tradition. As a matter of fact, many commentators have identified the narrative in Matthew and Mark with the parable recorded by S. Luke (xiii, 6). However, the resemblance between the two passages is not particularly close, and the changes that would have to be made are too remarkable for this hypothesis to have any chance of being generally accepted.' The hypothesis thus rejected has been adopted afresh by Loisy, II, 286.

object was, by a parable in action, to show to men the fate reserved by Him for those whom He compares to barren trees, which, having no vitality except in appearance, bear leaves and not fruit. Of this severe lesson, a tree was made the concrete example, while His deeds of mercy were wrought upon men. By this incident the disciples would understand the fate of Jerusalem and of the Chosen Race, a fate already prefigured in the parable of the *barren fig-tree* (Luke xiii, 6) : and now recognized afresh in this symbolic action of Christ, which has so many parallels in similar actions of the prophets of old.<sup>1</sup>

#### V. *Jesus in the Temple.*

‘ And it came to pass that on one of the days, as he was teaching the people in the temple and preaching the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes, with the ancients, met together and spoke to him, saying : Tell us, by what authority dost thou these things ? Or, who is he that hath given thee this authority ? And Jesus answering, said to them : I will also ask you one thing. Answer me : The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men ? ’ (Luke xx, 1-4.)

Not daring to reply to this question, the Jews withdrew.<sup>2</sup>

This was the first time that the chief priests took a personal part in the opposition to our Lord, although their attitude had been determined ever since the raising of Lazarus from the dead ; this man must die rather than imperil the existence of a whole nation (John xi, 50). Our Lord’s triumphal entry into Jerusalem and the authority He displayed in the Temple exasperated them still more, so that ‘ they sought how they might destroy Him ’ (Mark xi, 16 ; Luke xix, 47). On their part the scribes, burning to avenge their own grievance, supported the priests, while the

<sup>1</sup> Fr. Lagrange cites several of these : Isa. xx, 1 ; Jer. xiii, 1 ; xix, 1, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Luke xx, 1-8 ; cp. Matt. xxi, 23-27 ; Mark xi, 27-33. S. Matthew and S. Mark associate the summary here given with the expulsion of the traders from the Temple, a connection that does not appear in S. Luke. It may be reasonably conjectured that this purification of the Temple which S. John dates at the time of the first passover, has been recorded by the Synoptics here because the traditional catechetical scheme that they followed left out our Lord’s previous visits to Jerusalem. The dialogue transcribed above differs completely from that recorded by S. John. In accordance with S. Luke’s version it is independent of the incident of the cleansing of the Temple. Our own view is that the expulsion of the traders only took place at the time of the first Passover (*supra*, vol. I, p. 54, note 1).

elders joined themselves to the two other groups. Here we have already a microcosm of the Sanhedrin itself.

The complaint against our Lord was that He had usurped the authority of a Master and Doctor openly and in the Temple itself ; and they questioned Him, although not yet formally, as to the source from which this authority came.<sup>1</sup>

The purpose of the deputies of the Sanhedrin, as on similar occasions during these last few days, was to provoke Jesus to make the final declaration that should be His ruin ; if He appealed to His authority as the Messiah, proceedings against Him would be taken almost at once ; if He evaded this issue He would lose ground with the people.

Our Lord's reply was in quasi-rabbinical form, answering one question by putting another ; but it must not be interpreted as being merely a dialectical display. 'Why,' asks J. H. Michael,<sup>2</sup> 'did Jesus put this counter-question? Assuredly not because He foresaw that He would embarrass His opponents, and consequently excuse Himself from replying to them. We cannot imagine our Lord condescending to manœuvres of this kind with a view to an easy dialectical victory. The point of His reply is that if they had penetrated to the real meaning of S. John's baptism, they would have recognized the source of His own authority as well.'

These remarks are just. It must be added that John was the witness to Christ, and that Christ Himself on a similar occasion had recalled the fact (John v, 33). 'You sent to John and he gave testimony to the truth. But I receive not testimony from man : but I say those things that you may be saved.' And once more the same care governs His action ; to these men who have no thought but to compromise and destroy Him He would recall the memory of His Precursor ; if they are but willing to be taught, he will lead them to Christ as he has led so many others before.

But they care nothing about salvation : their sole thought is to escape without discomfiture from an embarrassing discussion.

<sup>1</sup> 'It is scarcely likely that, if they intended to introduce a regular and long drawn-out process, they would have sent a deputation to our Lord instead of citing Him to appear before them. For the rest there is nothing in question, answer, or any feature of the narrative to suggest that this interview differed from so many others that we have met with already' (Reuss).

<sup>2</sup> *Journal of Theological Studies*, XXI (1920), p. 158.

With John the Baptist, they had always taken up a defiant attitude, and that too openly for them to acknowledge him now without a complete change of front. Yet, face to face with a crowd still full of enthusiasm for his name, they dared not assert that his baptism was 'of men.' The tragic death of the Precursor had only increased his influence, and so convinced were the people of his Divine mission that they saw in the misfortunes of Antipas a judgement from heaven brought upon him by the prophet's death. Wishing neither to withdraw from their position nor to come into conflict with the people, the Pharisees simply shirked the issue; taking refuge in a profession of ignorance upon the point raised.

Our Lord might well have pressed His advantage, like the man born blind in the face of a similar reply: 'Why, herein is a wonderful thing, that you know not from whence He is, and He hath opened my eyes' (John ix, 30). But these dialectical triumphs, so dear to human pride, were unworthy of Him who sought only His Father's glory and the salvation of men. Before His opponents' bad faith He remained silent; there was to be no question of casting pearls before swine. But He went on instructing the people, all the same.

'But what think you? A certain man had two sons, and coming to the first, he said: Son, go work to-day in my vineyard. And he answering, said: I will not. But afterwards, being moved with repentance, he went. And coming to the other, he said in like manner. And he answering, said: I go, Sir. And he went not. Which of the two did the father's will? They say to Him: The first.' (Matt. xxi, 28-31.)

The meaning of the parable was clear enough, and Jesus supplied its application Himself.

'Jesus saith to them: Amen, I say to you, that the publicans and the harlots shall go into the kingdom of God before you. For John came to you in the way of justice: and you did not believe him. But the publicans and the harlots believed him: but you, seeing it, did not even afterwards repent, that you might believe him.' (Ibid., 31, 32.)



In the same strain, when recording our Lord's reply to the messengers sent by John, S. Luke remarked (vii, 29) :

‘ And all the people hearing, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with John's baptism. But the Pharisees and the lawyers despised the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized by him.’

Here we have the strongly contrasted attitude of the two sons in the parable : on the one hand the stubborn children who answer ‘ I will not ’ to their father's command ; on the other, sons eager and respectful, and making a great profession of obedience : ‘ I go, Sir.’ But the first repent and, touched by the preaching of the Precursor, they are baptized and bring forth fruits worthy of penance ; the others pride themselves on their show of submission, and there, for them, the matter ends.

It is the same warning so often given by Christ to those who made a great show of virtue and of their fidelity to the law, but went no further. It is the Pharisee and the publican over again, and it is the lesson taught by Christ in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. vii, 21) : ‘ Not everyone that saith to Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven : but he that doth the will of My Father who is in heaven.’ This was His teaching from the very commencement of His ministry in Galilee : ‘ . . . I am not come to call the just, but sinners ’ (ix, 13). And in this parable we see clearly where lies the superiority of sinners over the self-styled just, namely the humble acknowledgement of their fault, and the virile resolution that such penance brings forth. And once more our Lord tries to awaken this spirit, and to arouse these souls slumbering in the false security of their fancied justice ; and once more He fails, only irritating without enlightening them.

And then in the parable of the husbandmen recorded by all three Synoptics, He gave them a more solemn warning still.

‘ A certain man planted a vineyard and made a hedge about it, and dug a place for the winefat, and built a tower, and let it to husbandmen ; and went into a far country. And at the season he sent to the husbandmen a servant to receive of the husbandmen, of the fruit of the vineyard. Who having laid hands on him, beat him, and

sent him away empty. And again he sent to them another servant ; and him they wounded in the head, and used him reproachfully. And again he sent another and him they killed : and many others, of whom some they beat, and others they killed. Therefore, having yet one son most dear to him, he also sent him unto them last of all, saying : They will reverence my son. But the husbandmen said one to another : This is the heir : come let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours. And laying hold of him they killed him, and cast him out of the vineyard. What, therefore, will the lord of the vineyard do ? He will come and destroy those husbandmen : and will give the vineyard to others.' (Mark xii, 1-9 ; cp. Matt. xxi, 33-43 ; Luke xx, 9-18.)

Here, for the third time our Lord returns to the traditional figure of the vineyard, so often employed by the prophets as an illustration of the relations between God and His chosen people, and especially in the fifth chapter of *Isaías* :

' I will sing to my beloved the canticle of my cousin concerning his vineyard. My beloved had a vineyard on a hill in a fruitful place. And he fenced it in, and picked the stones out of it, and planted it with the choicest vines, and built a tower in the midst thereof, and set up a winepress therein. And he looked that it should bring forth grapes : and it brought forth wild grapes. And now, O ye inhabitants of Jerusalem and ye men of Juda, judge between me and my vineyard. What is there that I ought to do more to my vineyard, that I have not done to it ? Was it that I looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it hath brought forth wild grapes ? And now I will show you what I will do to my vineyard. I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be wasted : I will break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down. And I will make it desolate. It shall not be pruned and it shall not be digged : but briars and thorns shall come up. And I will command the clouds to rain no rain upon it. For the vineyard of the Lord of Hosts is the house of Israel : and the man of Juda his pleasant plant. And I looked that he should do judgement, and behold iniquity : and do justice, and behold a cry.' (Isa. v, 1-7.)

It is sufficient to read this passage through to notice how it differs from our Lord's parable. *Isaías* speaks to the whole people, who are themselves the vineyard that has disap-

pointed the expectation of Jehovah, and who will be punished accordingly, while Christ's words apply only to the leaders of the people; it is they who have been entrusted with the cultivation of God's vineyard and who are responsible for its fruitfulness to Him alone. Often has He claimed His just returns; but His messengers, the prophets, have all been ill-treated or slain. At last He sends His only Son, and He, too, is cast out of the vineyard and put to death.

So transparent is the image that the chiefs of the people understood it at once and felt that it was directed against themselves. The teaching underlying it is excelled nowhere in the Gospels in sublimity and depth. No wonder that scholars of the pseudo-critical school have refused to accept the evangelists' account.<sup>1</sup>

But their objections have little weight. Because the form of our Lord's discourse is that of an allegory rather than a parable, there is no need to doubt its authenticity. Indeed, Loisy himself admits that Jesus 'may, exceptionally, have taught in allegorical form, and, on other occasions, have quoted from the prophets.' That we have here prophecy and a threat is obvious, but our Lord's very mercy obliged Him to give these terrible warnings to His adversaries, and their authenticity is confirmed by the very form in which they are clothed:

'... I find,' writes Burkitt, 'a great difficulty in imagining any early Christian of any school who could do it (i.e., put this parable into our Lord's mouth). It seems to me certain that the thing which is *not* there is exactly what Christian invention would have put in: I mean, some reference to the Resurrection.'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Thus Loisy, II, 318: 'Are we bound to regard this allegory of the vineyard as an authentic portion of our Lord's preaching in Jerusalem, apparently delivered at a given moment as His last public discourse upon earth? No doubt, with the quotation from the prophet with which it ends, it belongs to a tradition already sufficiently established before the final redaction of the Gospels as we have them; but this does not guarantee it to be the actual words of Christ. . . . Like many allegories, its only value is in the realm of theory and theological thought. . . . We have to deal with an apocalypse, not preaching. It would not have been Christ's intention to win those to whom He was speaking: He would have declared them fallen and under censure, not to bring them to repentance, but to show His own knowledge of the Divine decrees. . . . If Jesus had proclaimed Himself Son of God before so many witnesses who were fully aware of His meaning, it is difficult to understand why His arrest was delayed a moment longer.'

<sup>2</sup> *Transactions of the Third International Congress of the History of Religions*, Oxford, 1908, II, pp. 321 ff.

And we may add that our Lord was careful to limit the terrible responsibility of His death to the chiefs of the people. The populace themselves were still attached to Him at that time ; and further, as Lagrange remarks, the vineyard which represents them is neither blameworthy nor threatened with punishment. ' Peter, on the other hand, except when he speaks before the Sanhedrin (Acts iv, 10, 11 ; v, 30, 31), makes no such distinction, but accuses all Israelites alike of the judicial murder of Christ (ii, 22, 23 ; iii, 15). From the moment that this parable was uttered the situation was changed.'

The authenticity of the parable being thus established we may pass on to its interpretation ; in which the principle is the unique and transcendent rôle of the Son of God. All who came before Him, however great, were merely servants sent by God : He is the only-begotten Son.<sup>1</sup> Already in much of His previous teaching, from the Sermon on the Mount onwards, there had been hints of our Lord's relation to His Father and of His own pre-eminent authority. ' It hath been said . . . but I say to you . . . ' and still more clearly in certain rare and mysterious pronouncements which He made from time to time : ' Neither doth any one know the Father but the Son, and he to whom it shall please the Son to reveal Him ' : but this pre-eminence is more clearly evident here than anywhere else ; under the transparent veil of the allegory we have the same teaching that we find later in the Epistle to the Hebrews : ' God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets, last of all, in these days hath spoken to us by His Son.' It is precisely because of the clearness of this declaration that Loisy, as we have seen, regards it as improbable : Jesus, he thinks, would have been arrested if He had spoken like this. This difficulty is answered by the Gospel itself : ' And they sought to lay hands on Him : but they feared the people ' (Mark xii, 12).

And, with this Divine dignity of the Son of God, the fate that awaits Him is made clear. This is the first time that our Lord had foretold His death before the people ; although we have already noticed the occasions on which He did so in the presence of His Apostles alone—at Cæsarea Philippi (Mark viii, 31) ; after the transfiguration (ix, 31) ; on the

<sup>1</sup> On the meaning of this expression, cp. *Origines du Dogme de la Trinité*, I, p. 324, note 2.

way to Jerusalem (x, 32). Then our Lord had only the twelve with Him, and He was preparing them for the terrible trial that was coming upon them ; here He warns the people as a whole, and consequently His warning takes on a new note. It is no longer only a prophecy, but a threat. He is making a final effort to prevent the crime that will complete the ruin of Israel.

In his note on this parable, Burkitt (p. 325) shows how this prediction of Christ's fits in with His teaching as a whole. At the time that our Lord came into the world, there was a widespread belief that the kingdom of God was at hand ; a belief that found expression in Apocalyptic literature, and in the words of the Precursor and of our Lord Himself : ' The time is accomplished and the kingdom of God is at hand ' (Mark i, 15). So imminent was the fulfilment of this expectation that the Apostles would not have time to traverse all the cities of Israel before the Son of Man should come in His glory (Matt. x, 23). Yet, somehow, the manifestation so long expected tarries ; something is delaying the imminent coming of the kingdom ; ' . . . when the fruit is brought forth . . . he putteth in the sickle ' (Mark iv, 29). But was the fruit ripe, and had the people been really converted by the preaching of John and of our Lord Himself? No, indeed. This is the meaning of the curses against the cities of the Lake, of the severe sayings about the perverse and adulterous and incredulous generation (viii, 12, 38 ; ix, 19) : all warnings uttered only shortly before the journey to Jerusalem. Taken as a whole, the nation was not repentant ; its sin remained and the coming of the kingdom was delayed. Almighty God was waiting : He would avenge His elect who cried to Him day and night (Luke xviii, 7). As our Lord assumes, in this very passage, God may long postpone the day of His vengeance, but at last His hour will come.

This death of the Son, foretold in the parable, would precipitate the catastrophe and, in this sense, serve the Divine purpose ; since it would be the means of saving the vineyard and of taking it out of the hands of the dishonest husbandmen whose one idea was to exploit it for their own gain. As we read the story, we cannot help feeling surprised that the master of the vineyard should thus expose his son, and it appears that this final effort was doomed to failure and the sacrifice involved proved fruitless after all ; in time,

exemplary punishment would fall on the wrong-doers, but this tardy chastisement would be but a poor consolation for the death of the only son. But all this is cleared up when the application of the parable is understood. Almighty God knew that He was sending His beloved Son to His death ; but He knew also that that death would be for the salvation and redemption of men ; a truth already explained to the Apostles by our Lord Himself : ‘ . . . the Son of Man also is not come to be ministered unto ; but to minister and to give His life a redemption for many ’ (Mark x, 45). ‘ Which they hearing, said to Him : God forbid.’ This exclamation of the crowd, recorded only by Luke (xx, 16), shows plainly enough that they were under no misapprehension as to what was meant by the vineyard being taken out of the hands of the wicked husbandmen and entrusted to other care. And our Lord, ‘ looking on them ’ only pressed home His point : ‘ Have you never read in the Scriptures : The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner ? By the Lord, this has been done, and it is wonderful in our eyes. . . . And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken : but on whomsoever it shall fall, it shall grind him to powder ’ (Matt. xxi, 42, 43).

Our Lord’s concluding words lend a terrific force to His whole discourse as recorded here. We seem to see Him, as painted by S. Luke, fixing His enemies with His glance, and threatening them with the fall and utter destruction which He has just described. A glorious prophecy, no doubt, but painful, too, showing Christ to be truly, as Simeon had foretold, ‘ set for the fall and resurrection of many.’

The chief priests and the scribes would have seized Jesus there and then, but their fear of the people held them back, and they left Him for the time being. This hatred and timidity had already been noticed by S. Mark as evident after the triumphal entry into Jerusalem (xi, 18), as on the present occasion (xii, 12) ; and all through this last week we shall find the same furious hostility restrained by fear ; indeed, speaking of the very day when the Passion begins the evangelist observes : ‘ the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might by some wile lay hold on Him and kill Him ’ (xiv, 1). Our Lord’s teaching became ever clearer and His threats more terrible ; its blinding light only wounded without converting them ; and they were kept from seizing Him by fear alone. But soon Judas would

put himself at their service and give them the guarantees they needed for their deadly work.

However, they go on with their attempts to catch our Redeemer in His speech.<sup>1</sup> Worst of all, so far, in all the encounters they had provoked, they could not believe that an unlettered Galilean could for long escape their snares. So they approached Him again, but with greater caution : ' Master, we know that Thou art a true speaker and carest not for any man ; for Thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth. Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, or shall we not give it ? '

The question thus raised was captious in the last degree, and Jesus' enemies might well flatter themselves that they had Him securely in a trap. In the eyes of the Romans, to refuse to pay taxes was an act of rebellion ; and in order to compass His destruction, in spite of His caution, they would not fail to say later that He had sought to dissuade the people from paying tribute to Cæsar. But, to the people, to submit to such payment was an odious act of subjection ; so that, surely, to claim to be the Messiah and the King of Israel and yet, at the same time, to preach the payment of the impost, was to renounce the dearest hopes of Israel and one's own claims at the same time. The scandal of such action would have been felt most acutely by the Galileans, our Lord's most faithful followers,<sup>2</sup> for it was from their ranks that the zealots of the Jewish national movement were recruited on the largest scale ; one of the Apostles and doubtless many of our Lord's disciples belonging to this extreme party in the state. To take Jesus in this particular snare, a deputation of Pharisees and Herodians was sent to Him. The second of these wished to see Judea brought under the sceptre of a prince of the Herodian line ; meanwhile they submitted to the Roman power ; and the presence of Herod himself at the Passover celebrations had brought a large number of his supporters to the Holy City. In spite of their opposition to the Pharisees, they joined with them in their attempt to ensnare our Lord.

<sup>1</sup> Following Mark, we pursue the story of our Lord's contest with His enemies. Matthew inserts here the parable of the Wedding Feast (xxii, 1-14).

<sup>2</sup> Josephus (B.J., II, 8, 1) relates the rising in the time of Coponius, which was instigated by a Galilean named Judas : ' he made his fellow-countrymen ashamed to pay tribute to the Romans, and to suffer any other master than God, i.e., mortal masters ' (Billerbeck, I, 884).

To the question thus maliciously proposed to Him, Jesus gave a perfectly simple reply. He sent for a 'penny,' the silver coin used to pay the Roman tribute. It was not very common in Palestine, and probably neither our Lord nor His questioners had one by them at the moment. The coin was brought and our Lord asks : 'Whose is this image and inscription?' It was not possible to reply by silence or by a profession of ignorance, as the Jews had done when the baptism of John was the point at issue. So the answer was given, 'Cæsar's.' 'Render therefore,' said our Lord, 'to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's.'

The reply was eminently natural and could not be thought otherwise by the Jews themselves. To employ a foreign coinage was felt to be an act of subjection, which was why the Machabees had created a new currency and why Bar Kokebas tried later on to do the same. However, Cæsar's money was accepted, which meant that the Jews acknowledged that they were his subjects and that they forced themselves to pay his tribute. But our Lord's reply goes further than this. 'To Cæsar what is Cæsar's : to God what is God's ;' an eternally fertile principle which, if acted upon, would bring peace and order to the world, and which was particularly necessary at that period and in the environment of the time. In the little Jewish world in which Jesus moved and spoke, men were still influenced by the grand memories of a theocratic government of the past : 'the kingdom of David, our father.' This was the subject of their acclamations only a few days ago ; and it is this that they are awaiting with feverish impatience now. To these zealots any submission to a foreign power seemed an act of infidelity to God, the only King of Israel ; and our Lord's words would teach them peacefully to obey earthly kings while keeping inviolate their loyalty to God. Soon the Church would begin to spread in the Pagan world and would have to triumph over a prejudice of an opposite kind, but still more dangerous, by which the Divine Majesty would be brought to the level of earthly rulers ; and Cæsar, the god, would claim all the homage of men. But in the midst of this universal servility Christians would keep their souls free ; recalling the Master's precepts, they would give to Roman emperors and governors obedience and respect, indeed ; but they would keep their faith in



God ; and at that moment true freedom would have entered the world.

After the Pharisees, the Sadducees intervened in their turn (Mark xii, 18-27 ; Matt. xxii, 23-33 ; Luke xx, 27-40). Disturbed at the growing influence of Jesus they were determined to bring about His death. Really, as we are told definitely in Acts v, 17, by the Sadducees is meant the party of the High Priest. The question that they put to our Lord seems to have been meant to mock rather than to compromise Him. They did not believe in a resurrection any more than in angels or spirits of any kind (Acts xxiii, 8 ; Josephus, A.J., xviii, 1, 4) ; so they manufactured a 'case' for their present purpose.

'Master, Moses wrote unto us, that if any man's brother die, and leave his wife behind him, and leave no children, his brother should take his wife and raise up seed to his brother. Now there were seven brethren ; and the first took a wife, and died leaving no issue. And the second took her and died ; and neither did he leave any issue. And the third in like manner. And the seven all took her in like manner : and did not leave issue. Last of all the woman also died. In the resurrection, therefore, when they shall rise again, whose wife shall she be of them ? for the seven had her to wife.' (Luke xx, 28-32 ; cp. Mark xii, 19-23 ; Matt. xxii, 24-28.)<sup>1</sup>

Confronted with this piece of 'heckling' our Lord remained calm and answered gently ; but He raised the question to a higher plane and without keeping to the ridiculous case that had been proposed, proceeded to instruct His enemies and all who were listening to Him at the time. As a matter of fact He never contented Himself with merely closing His opponents' mouths, but always attempted to give them some teaching on positive lines. In this particular case He reproved the Sadducees for failing to understand the Scriptures and for having an inadequate idea of the power of God. To their unbelief

<sup>1</sup> In *Jebamoth*, iv, 6b, 35 we find the history of an Israelite who, having lost his twelve brothers, and being called upon by the twelve widows to obey the leviratical law, agreed to take each one of them as his wife during one month of the year. At the end of three years he was father of thirty-six children (Billerbeck, III, 650). This story is told of the time of Rabbi Jehudah ; no doubt, like this of the Sadducees, it is only an imaginary case ; but it shows the extent to which Jewish casuistry concerned itself with the 'levirate' laws.

He opposed and enlarged upon a text from Exodus : ' I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob ' ; ' God,' He said, ' is not the God of the dead but of the living ; for all live to Him.' S. Irenæus, when opposing the Gnostics, makes use of this text together with our Lord's interpretation of it : ' If God is not the God of the dead but of the living, and if, moreover, this God is called the God of the dead patriarchs, it inevitably follows that they live to God and that they are not dead, since they are sons of resurrection. But the resurrection is our Lord Himself.'<sup>1</sup>

Other passages in the Old Testament could be quoted as supporting faith in the resurrection, but none could do so more clearly than this sublime utterance as interpreted by Christ. The Church, later on, would call it to memory in her office of the dead. ' Regem, cui omnia vivunt, venite adoremus.' The friends of God live of His life, and it will have no end. But this new life, communicated by God to His elect, will not be modelled on that here below ; the ' sons of Resurrection ' will be like the angels of heaven : ' they shall neither marry nor be married.'<sup>2</sup>

This sublime teaching on the divine life of the elect was called forth by the miserable raillery of the Sadducees, and as we read the passage over again we inevitably recall our Lord's words : ' You are from below : I am from above.' Many among His hearers felt the force of His teaching ; even the most hardened had to acknowledge that He had

<sup>1</sup> *Adv. Haer.*, IV, 5, 2 ; P.G., VII, 984-985. Cp. *Histoire du Dogme de la Trinité*, II, p. 547. S. Jerome, raising the question as to why our Lord chose this particular text from Exodus, gives the following reason : ' The Sadducees only accepted the five books of Moses, rejecting the oracles of the prophets ; so that it would have been folly to confront them with witnesses whose authority they refused to admit.' However, at the present day, this interpretation is called in question. Thus Schürer (II, 480-1) writes : ' The statement made by several of the Fathers that the Sadducees only received the Pentateuch, rejecting the prophets, finds no support in Josephus and is therefore denied by the majority of contemporary scholars, and indeed we can hardly believe that, strictly speaking, they refused the authority of the prophets. Still, it is quite possible that the Sadducees regarded the Pentateuch only as being canonical in the strict sense of the word.' This last hypothesis would suffice to explain our Lord's choice of a text whose meaning was less clear than many passages in the prophets, but whose authority was greater than theirs. Further, as we have pointed out above, there are yet other reasons for our Lord's choice.

<sup>2</sup> On this point Jesus opposes the theology of the Pharisees which often ascribes to risen bodies the same sexual relations that they had on earth. Cp. Billerbeck, II, 888, but also *Berakot*, 17a.

the best of the dispute, and no one dared to try to catch Him any more.

‘And there came one of the scribes that had heard them reasoning together, and seeing that He had answered them well, asked Him which was the first commandment of all. And Jesus answered him : The first commandment of all is, Hear, O Israel : the Lord thy God is one God. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind, and with thy whole strength. This is the first commandment. And the second is like to it : Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is no other commandment greater than these. And the scribe said to Him : Well, Master, Thou hast said in truth, that there is one God, and there is no other besides Him. And that He should be loved with the whole heart, and with the whole understanding, and with the whole soul, and with the whole strength : and to love one’s neighbour as oneself, is a greater thing than all holocausts and sacrifices. And Jesus, seeing that he had answered wisely, said to him : Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him any question.’<sup>1</sup> (Mark xii, 28-34.)

There were frequent discussions among the Jews of that period as to the relative importance of the commandments ; a good example is to be found in the following parable from the *Debarim Rabba*, 6, with reference to Deut. xxii, 7.<sup>2</sup>

‘A king hired workmen and sent them into his garden, and in the evening made inquiries as to the work done by each. Calling the first, he asked him : “What tree have you been working under ?” “Under such and such a one,” was the reply. “That is a pear-tree, and the wages are a piece of gold.” Calling another, he puts the same question to him, and hearing the reply : “That is an almond-tree,” he said, “the wages are a half-piece of gold.” Similarly with a third, in whose case, “that is an olive,”

<sup>1</sup> In Matt. xxii, 34-40 we have the same question and answer, but the question is put with the intention of testing our Lord. By way of reconciling the two accounts we may hold with Victor and Knabenbauer that the scribe, ill-disposed at first, is won over by our Lord’s reply. Luke does not record the question here, but in the narrative describing our Lord’s journey (x, 25-37), he mentions a similar question, followed by a reply from our Lord and by the parable of the Good Samaritan.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted by Abrahams, *Studies in Pharisaism*, I, p. 26.

remarks the king, "the wages are two hundred *zuzim*." When the workmen ask him: "Why did you not tell us that work on this particular tree carried with it a higher reward, so that we could have chosen it?" the king answers: "If I had warned you, I should never have had my whole garden tended." In the same way the Holy One has not revealed the reward reserved for good work done except in the case of two commandments, the most important of the greater ones; namely, 'honour thy parents' (Exodus xx, 12), and the least among the least: 'thou shalt let her go, keeping the young [bird] which thou hast caught' (Deut. xxii, 7). For these two commandments He has fixed the reward—that is, a long life.'

This little fable, whose morality is not above suspicion, at least shows the kind of question that exercised the Jews; they did not know which were the most important and the best rewarded commandments, and they wished to know. For the rest, at this period there seems to have been, on the part of the Pharisees, a certain mistrust of these simplifications of the law.<sup>1</sup> A great effort was being made to multiply proselytes, and in order to make Judaism more accessible to them, in the form in which it was presented to inquirers its obligations were considerably reduced; the seven precepts of Noe, which lay at the bottom of the principal duties, being given the most prominent place. In other cases a double catalogue of commandments was set forth, namely, what must be done—honouring parents, doing kind acts, reconciling those who had quarrelled, studying the Torah; and what must be avoided—idolatry, incest, bloodshed, homicide (*Aboth* of R. Nathan). 'Such catalogues,' remarks Gudemann, 'were often suspect to the zealots, who saw in them a minimizing policy, which misled the ignorant by leading them to suppose that they could be faithful members of the Jewish faith at but little cost.'

In the maze of all these guesses, calculations and fruitless inquiries, Jesus traces the path by which men must go to God. All the law and the prophets (Matt. xxii, 40) meet in these two commandments, the love of God and of our neighbour. We may recognize, for example, the echo of this

<sup>1</sup> Usually 613 commandments were enumerated, i.e. 248 positive precepts and 365 prohibitions, while an attempt was made to distinguish the commandments of greater and lesser importance in those lists. Cp. *Makkot*, 23b-24a; *Sifre*, Deut. xii, 23; *Mekhilta*, Exod. xx, 2.

teaching on the opening page of the *Didache*. 'There are two ways, the way of life and the way of death, and there is much difference between the two. This is the way of life : First, thou shalt love God who has created thee ; secondly, thy neighbour as thyself ; and whatsoever thou dost not wish to happen to thyself, thou shalt not do to others.'

No one dared to question Jesus further. It was He who now took the initiative and interrogated the Pharisees in their turn :

'What think you of Christ? Whose son is He? They say to Him: David's. He saith to them: How then doth David in spirit call Him Lord, saying: The Lord said to my Lord: Sit on my right hand, until I make thy enemies thy footstool? If David then call Him Lord, how is He his son? And no man was able to answer Him a word: neither durst any man from that day forth ask Him any more questions.' (Matt. xxii, 42-46; cp. Mark xii, 35-37; Luke xx, 41-44.)

S. Matthew records this incident in the form of a question put to the Pharisees. Our Lord's enemies are reduced to silence, and from this day onward, no one dared to 'ask Him any more questions.' However, according to Mark and Luke, Christ did not address His remarks to His opponents, but taught the crowd at large. We must not exaggerate this apparent discrepancy. As we have already remarked, in no single case did our Lord set out with the exclusive purpose of silencing His adversaries: it was always His intention to teach the people as well. But as we shall readily understand, while Mark dwells only on this teaching, S. Matthew, as usual, stresses the polemical side of Jesus' words.

What is more important is to discover the precise purpose that our Lord had in view. Most critics of the liberal school consider that He intended to deny His descent from David.<sup>1</sup> But this is most improbable if we remember that, as even Loisy admits, certainly Matthew and Luke, and very probably Mark, regarded Jesus as the descendant of David,

<sup>1</sup> So Loisy: 'From the question here put by Jesus, we may conclude that He did not consider Himself to be descended from David, thus overthrowing and anticipating the objection that could be drawn from this circumstance against His Divine mission. Freed from all theological subtlety, the burden of His discourse is that Christ has no need to be the Son of David and that His dignity is derived from a higher source.'

and could not, therefore, intend to imply here a denial of that fact. The same critic interprets this passage with greater accuracy some pages earlier in his book (361): 'David,' he says, 'could speak like this because the Messiah is more than a son of David and a king of Israel; such is the conclusion to which Christ wishes to lead His hearers. Jesus is conscious of being greater than Solomon, greater than Jonas, greater than David himself, and consequently He has a greater title than could be His by any merely Davidic descent. It might even be said that He was independent of anything of the kind, and made little of any passages from which the Davidic descent of the Messiah might be inferred.'

Disregarding the concluding words of this passage, the rest supplies an exact interpretation of our Saviour's words. He is conscious of being greater than David and He wishes to lead on His hearers to share this consciousness with Him. It by no means follows that He denies the fact of His Davidic descent; He had been saluted as Son of David, especially at His triumphant entry into Jerusalem, and had not repudiated such homage in any way. But He had no intention of leaving the matter there. That would involve not only a misconception of His true greatness, but also a narrow and dangerously nationalistic view of the Messiahship itself. Against this kind of Messianism He had always contended and would do so especially during the last days of His life.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ps. cix was regarded as a Messianic psalm by the Jews of our Lord's time; but in the second century this interpretation was abandoned through anti-Christian feeling; hence it was applied either to Abraham (see Billerbeck, IV, 453-6) or to Ezechias (Justin, *Dial.*, 33 and 83). A century later there was a reaction in favour of the Messianic interpretation. Cp. Billerbeck, 18. Excurs. *Der 110. Psalm in der altrabb. Literatur* (IV, 452-65); E. G. King, *Ps. cx*, J.T.S., IV (1903), pp. 338-44 (see esp. p. 343); Klausner, *Jesus of Nazareth*, p. 320.

Most contemporary critics reject the Davidic authorship of the psalm here quoted: the question, therefore, arises whether this hypothesis can be reconciled with our Lord's authority as a teacher and with the force of His argument on this occasion. Some authors think not, for example, Knabenbauer (*Matt.*, II, 273), according to whom if David is not the author of the psalm our Lord's conclusions are '*futilia, ridicula, falsa*.' On the other hand, Lagrange (*Marc*, p. 327) writes: 'It was neither absurd nor useless to establish the fact that the scribes were not even consistent with their own principles in refusing to recognize that the Messiah must be far superior to David and even to point out His supernatural origin. . . . The whole argument was of the nature of a refutation, and must be left as such. As a refutation it is admirably conclusive and rigorously precise and that was all that was necessary at the moment.'

Plummer (*Matt.*, 311), in discussing the same question, proposes three

VI. *Jesus and the Pharisees.*

Each time that our Lord was present in Jerusalem He encountered the hostility of the Pharisees, finding them on every occasion more implacable than before. He saw His disciples threatened with excommunication (John ix, 22 ; xii, 42), and Himself condemned to death, so far as this lay within His enemies' power, while after the raising of Lazarus He was pursued with a fury that knew no bounds. His influence over the people continued to protect Him for a few days ; but the Pharisees, in league with the Sadducees and making use of Judas' avarice, were soon to bring this slender support to the ground.

During the first days of this last week, these captious dialecticians tried in vain to entangle our Blessed Lord in their net. But Jesus broke through their meshes, and having reduced them to silence, devoted His few remaining days of freedom to giving one last warning to the people and to the false shepherds who were responsible for their souls. This final discourse, reproduced very fully in S. Matthew (xxiii), is recorded much more briefly in S. Mark (xii, 37-40) and S. Luke (xx, 45-47) in whose version we find several passages recorded in other connections (xi, 39-52 ; xiii, 34-5) by the same evangelist.

Possibly, S. Matthew has grouped the scattered sayings into one whole, as in the case of the parables and the Sermon on the Mount. Very probably, however, this discourse of our Lord was actually much fuller than we should gather from either S. Mark or S. Luke,<sup>1</sup> and it is S. Matthew who seems to us to put in the clearest light, writing of the very last day of our Lord's life, the invincible opposition between His teaching and that of the Pharisees.

The discourse can be divided into three parts.<sup>2</sup> In the first (1-12) Christ addressed the crowd and His own dis-

solutions : the first is that of Lagrange, the second cannot be admitted, the third may be held. The three views are :

1. Jesus argues on the hypothesis of His opponents.
2. Jesus shared the error of His time.
3. The psalmist speaks in the person of David.—So the argument retains its value whoever the author of the psalm may be, provided that it is David into whose mouth the words are actually put.

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Plummer, *S. Matt.*, p. 313.

<sup>2</sup> Among the charges made by our Lord in this discourse, J. Jeremias (*Jerusalem zur Zeit Jesu*, II, p. 124) distinguishes between those that refer chiefly to the scribes (1-22, 29-36) and those directed at the Pharisees

ciples, in the second (13-36), which is the longest and most severe, He directly attacked the Pharisees ; the third part (37-40) contains His farewell to Jerusalem, in which He records with emotion what He has done for that city, all, alas, in vain.

The solemn lessons which our Lord taught on this occasion were all the more necessary because of the sacred nature of the authority that the Pharisees had abused. He, Himself, took care to safeguard this authority in His opening words.

‘ The scribes and the Pharisees have sitten on the chair of Moses. All things therefore whatsoever they shall say to you, observe and do ; but according to their works do ye not : for they say, and do not. For they bind heavy and insupportable burdens : and lay them on men’s shoulders : but with a finger of their own they will not move them. And all their works they do for to be seen of men.’ (2-5.)

Here Pharisaism appears as an essentially human religion which is precisely what made it barren, insufferable and hypocritical to so great an extent. Its authority rested on the ‘ traditions of men,’ and in their approval it looked for its reward, while it left out of account the glory that comes from God alone.<sup>1</sup> It was just here that they were in opposition to Christ’s religion, wholly heavenly and divine. ‘ You are from below, I am from above.’ Hence the quest for the first place at the feast, and for precedence in the synagogues (6). Even our Lord’s own disciples, who had received their early training in this school, had learned there a jealous desire of high position in the very kingdom of God itself ; and our Lord had spared no pains to convert them from this spirit of pride, although, so far, His most pressing warnings had glanced lightly over their souls. The weight of the Cross would be needed before their lesson of humility was learned.

(23-8). Similarly in the Sermon on the Mount, our Lord seems sometimes to have the scribes chiefly in mind (Matt. v, 21-48) and sometimes the Pharisees (vi, 1-18). These two classes of our Lord’s enemies are clearly distinguished in Luke xi, 39-44 and 46-52. Really the leaders of the Pharisees were all scribes, but many Pharisees were not, and instances can be quoted of scribes who were not Pharisees (*ibid.*, p. 127).

<sup>1</sup> Cp. John xii, 43 : ‘ They loved the glory of men more than the glory of God.’ And v. 44 : ‘ How can you believe, who receive glory one from another : and the glory which is from God alone you do not seek ? ’



The Pharisees laid claim to dominion over men's souls, and insisted on being called Master, Doctor, Father ; titles destined to become inoffensive enough when the Christian, hailing his ' Father ' in the person of the Apostle, would remember that every grace came to him from God, who alone was truly his Father.<sup>1</sup>

To that extent, our Lord's word must be taken in the most literal sense.

' Call none your father upon earth : for one is your Father who is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters, for one is your Master, Christ.' (9, 10.)

Further, from this anxiety to shine before men and to please them sprang that casuistry which, sometimes aiming at a pitiless rigidity, at others taught the shirker as to how to evade duties of the gravest kind ! ' Whosoever shall swear by the Temple it is nothing ; but he that shall swear by the gold of the Temple, he is a debtor ' (18). There would be a tendency to parade the most scrupulous fidelity to the most exacting minutiae of the rabbinic tradition, ' the tithe, mint and anise and cummin,' thus attracting the notice of men ; while despising the religion that God loves : ' judgement and mercy and faith ' (23). And this distortion of conscience was all the more grave because it was taught to God's people by their religious guides, who put all their impassioned zeal into the work of drawing into their error all whom they could reach, Jew or Pagan alike.

Many times before, at Capharnaum, in the Sermon on the Mount, throughout the whole Galilean ministry, Jesus had denounced this deadly peril of Pharisaism, and tried to snatch souls from its grasp. And on this last day of His ministry He makes a final attempt. Apparently He failed, for His opponents remained obstinate in their error, inflamed against Himself ; yet ' heaven and earth shall pass away,' but never the words of Christ ; they are graven on the disciples' mind, and have become the law of the Church herself. Christians too are exposed to the danger of a merely human religious life, to hypocrisy and to pride ; and if the ' little flock ' are preserved from this, they owe it only to the teaching and the grace of Christ. Once again let us read our Lord's burning words :

' But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites,

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. iv. 15. Cp. *ibid.*, iii, 7 ; Eph. iii, 15.

because you shut the kingdom of heaven against men : for you yourselves do not enter in and those that are going in you suffer not to enter.<sup>1</sup> Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you devour the houses of widows, praying long prayers. For this you shall receive the greater judgement. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you go round about the sea and the land to make one proselyte. And when he is made, you make him the child of hell, twofold more than yourselves. Woe to you, blind guides, that say, Whosoever shall swear by the Temple, it is nothing : but he that shall swear by the gold of the Temple is a debtor. Ye foolish and blind : for whether is greater, the gold, or the Temple that sanctifieth the gold ? And whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing : but whosoever shall swear by the gift that is upon it is a debtor. Ye blind : for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift ? He therefore that sweareth by the altar sweareth by it and by all things that are upon it. And whosoever shall swear by the Temple sweareth by it and by Him that dwelleth in it. And he that sweareth by heaven sweareth by the throne of God and by Him that sitteth thereon. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites : because you tithe mint and anise and cummin and have left the weightier things of the law : judgement and mercy and faith. These things you ought to have done and not to leave those undone. Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites : because you make clean the outside of the cup and of the dish, but within you are full of rapine and uncleanness. Thou blind Pharisee, first make clean the inside of the cup and of the dish, that the outside may become clean. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites : because you are like to whited sepulchres, which outwardly appear to men beautiful, but within are full of dead men's bones and of all filthiness. So you also outwardly indeed appear to men just : but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and iniquity. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, that build the sepulchres of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the just. And say : If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers

<sup>1</sup> Verse 14 is of doubtful authenticity. Cp. Durand, p. 373.

with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore you are witnesses against yourselves, that you are the sons of them that killed the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. You serpents, generation of vipers, how will you flee from the judgement of hell? Therefore behold I send to you prophets and wise men and scribes : and some of them you will put to death and crucify : and some you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city. That upon you may come all the just blood that hath been shed upon the earth, from the blood of Abel the just, even unto the blood of Zacharias the son of Barachias, whom you killed between the Temple and the altar. Amen, I say to you, all these things shall come upon this generation.' (Matt. xxiii, 13-36.)

This is the most terrible utterance in the whole Gospel, and has scandalized many. Thus Montefiore writes : ' The truth is that the Gospels, of which men commonly speak as if one found in them nothing but love and charity, are sometimes full of hatred. . . . What has become of the precept of Deuteronomy : the fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers? Is it not here the Old Law which might proudly turn the tables and say in its turn : You pretend that my children shall expiate the blood of the righteous ; but I say unto you : Where are the suavities of the Sermon on the Mount? Where are the beatitudes? Where the order to bless those who curse you? '

These words, so unjust and so blind, have been borrowed by E. Havet.<sup>1</sup> We may excuse them up to a certain point in a Jew, but we utterly fail to understand their use by one who has had a Christian upbringing. All the same, they may serve to call our attention to a fact we might have overlooked, and if familiarity has somewhat softened our first impression, they will make us realize how exceptional, in the Gospel, these terrible maledictions are.

For the rest, if they are terrible, many warnings had gone before them. First, John the Baptist had told the Pharisees who came to hear him : ' Ye brood of vipers, who hath showed you to flee from the wrath to come? ' These are the very words that our Lord uses here. We rightly remember the beatitudes, but we must not forget the maledictions that

<sup>1</sup> *Le Christianisme et ses Origines*, IV, 244, 273. Montefiore, *The Synoptic Gospels* (London, 1927), II, 303.

follow immediately after in S. Luke : ' Woe to you that are rich ; woe to you that are filled ; woe to you that now laugh ; woe to you when men shall bless you.' Those thus condemned by our Lord were those who took exactly the opposite line to that of the moral teaching of the Gospel ; but we can easily understand that the severest condemnation is kept for those who are teachers of error, and occasions of scandal to the people, and only wishing to become the executioners of Christ Himself. A little farther back we read : ' Woe to him through whom (an offence) cometh. It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and he cast into the sea.' Here again we are led to realize something of the difference between the responsibility of him who scandalizes a child, and that of the Pharisees who cause the loss of the whole people of God, and bring about the Messias' death !

We remember perfectly well that children ought not to be condemned for their fathers' faults, nor is that the sense of the Gospel curses. All the blood shed would fall on this generation because it was to put to death Him whom all the just and all the prophets had desired and foretold. Not long before, Jesus had told His Apostles : ' Many kings have desired to see the things that you see and have not seen them.' And now it is this Desire of the ages that the Pharisees and scribes are going to put to death ! And so, just as all the sanctity of the patriarchs and prophets is about to be fulfilled in this Messias, who is the climax of all their hopes, in the same way all the outrages of the past are to be consummated in this unjust crime. And after our Lord, His followers will be persecuted by the same enemies, scourged, hunted from town to town, and put to death.

Jesus saw open before Him all this future of bloody persecution, and for the last time He tried to turn the people from the path they were pursuing to their own destruction. This was the purpose of the parables of the preceding days ; and now He tries to make it clearer in the terrible invectives that we find here. No one has any right to be surprised ; quite the reverse ; it would have been surprising if our Lord, who loved His people, had not, just before His Passion, made a last effort to warn them and gather them to Himself.

And if anyone still doubts if His love can be found in curses like these, let them read the passage to the end : for they will finish with a sob.

‘Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered together thy children, as the hen doth gather her chickens under her wings, and thou wouldest not. Behold, your house shall be left to you, desolate. For I say to you, you shall not see me henceforth till you say : Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.’ (Matt. xxiii, 37-39.)

This tragic appeal was the last made to Jerusalem. Jesus had only a few more days to live, and He was going to devote them to His faithful followers alone. The city would hear Him no more, and the Temple would be deserted by Him. Yet from afar we catch a glimpse of a very different prospect, that of a glorious and triumphant return, which, at long last, Jerusalem would hail with joy. But when this should be was God’s secret ; a point that our Lord would develop still further with His disciples as they left the terraces of the Temple behind them.

#### *VII. The Consummation of the World, and the Parousia.*

This great eschatological discourse is closely connected, at least in S. Matthew, with our Lord’s maledictions against the Pharisees. Having uttered these curses and wept over Jerusalem and the Temple, He left the place, and crossing Cedron with His disciples ascended the Mount of Olives. The higher they climbed the more the great mass of the Temple stood out in ever stronger relief on the hill they had just left, and the disciples could not take their eyes off it. ‘Do you see all these things?’ said our Lord. ‘Amen, I say to you, there shall not be left here a stone upon a stone that shall not be destroyed.’ And when they paused, and our Lord was sitting on the Mount, ‘the disciples came to Him privately, saying : “Tell us when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of Thy coming and of the consummation of the world?”’ (Matt. xxiv, 2-3).

The disciples’ admiration for this great building which seemed to defy the passage of time, and their veneration for the holy ground on which it stood, made more painful still our Lord’s prophecy, that of its massive framework one stone should not rest upon another. They kept silence for the moment, no doubt overwhelmed by the grim prospect as they had been more than once by the prediction of His

Passion. But they knew, too, the danger of such prophecies : one of the accusations that would soon be brought against Jesus would be precisely that He had foretold the destruction of the Temple (Mark xiv, 58 ; Matt. xxvi, 61) ; while later on, the same complaint would be renewed against the first martyr, S. Stephen : ‘ . . . we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place and shall change the traditions which Moses delivered unto us ’ (Acts vi, 14). So they waited until the summit of the Mount was reached, and when our Lord was seated, Peter, James, John and Andrew came to question Him of themselves. The immediate bearing of their question was on the Parousia and the end of the world. Such a catastrophe as the ruin of the Temple was envisaged by them only in the perspective of the Last Day ; and, as a matter of fact, our Lord did associate the two groups of facts in His reply. Jerusalem and its holy ground would disappear in a terrible catastrophe ; the whole earth and the whole universe would be dissolved in a final cataclysm at the consummation of the world.

Before, however, describing these great tragedies Christ warns His Apostles : ‘ Take heed that no man seduce you. For many will come in My name, saying, I am Christ. And they will seduce many ’ (Matt. xxiv, 4, 5).

This warning is to be explained by the events that our Lord had just foretold, and by the dispositions of the Apostles themselves. The ruin of the Temple, that would bring all of what Christ was then speaking in its train, would seem to be the final and decisive crisis in the Apostles’ eyes ; and amidst the distress and anguish of that time, false prophets and false Messiaes would multiply, like Theudas who, giving himself out to be a new Josue, would promise the people to lead them dry foot over Jordan once again.<sup>1</sup> Nor would it be only the sheer horror of the crisis that would bring forth such impostors, spontaneously, so to speak ; there would be the impatience born of Apocalyptic hopes as well. Already, during our Lord’s preaching, men had been looking forward to a kingdom of God that should come like some cataclysmic display of nature ; and it would be the same after He had gone. Even in the Church would be found those of fervid imagination who would expect Christ’s coming from one day to another, and who

<sup>1</sup> A.J., XX, v, 1, 97-99. Cp. R.B., 1906, 384.

would see in the catastrophe at Jerusalem the signal for a mighty manifestation of His power. Against any such temptation the Apostles must be on their guard, and wars, famines and plagues notwithstanding, must give no credence to impostors who present themselves as the Messias. They must go on with their work amid persecutions and sufferings of every kind.

‘But look to yourselves. For they shall deliver you up to councils : and in the synagogues you shall be beaten : and you shall stand before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony unto them. And unto all nations the gospel must first be preached.’ (Mark xiii, 9, 10.)

The same predictions occur in a different context in S. Matthew, where they appear among the instructions given by Jesus to His disciples before He sent them out on their missionary tour.<sup>1</sup>

Still they are not out of place here. These great trials, which will be the beginning of sorrows, will personally affect the disciples, putting their constancy to the proof and provoking their impatience. Persecution, more even than the sight of external calamities, will tend to excite apocalyptic dreams ; and our Lord wished to warn His Apostles against such impatience, and to point out to them the long endurance that would be necessary if, without weakening, they were to bear all these trials. One detail, found also in S. Matthew, stresses the fact of this duration : ‘. . . Unto all nations the Gospel must first be preached,’ or, in S. Matthew’s words : ‘. . . In the whole world, for a testimony to all nations : and then shall the consummation come.’ This was enough to give the Apostles at least a glimpse of the immense prospect opening up before them ; the last hour must remain unknown to them, while it would be the object of their ardent desires ; yet in spite of all, they could not forget the immense field that Christ had opened to them, and that His Gospel would cover ; but they could not know how long it would be before that could come to pass.

And with these glimpses into the future were mingled

<sup>1</sup> Lagrange, R.B., 385, thinks that the second context is the more natural one ; but adds : ‘The tone does not cease to be apocalyptic because of the picture of dissensions penetrating into the family circle itself. We find this in Micheas vii, 6 ; but it goes still further back.’ Cp. the same writer’s commentary on S. Mark xiii, 12, p. 339.

certain exhortations to the Apostles themselves : confidence in the Holy Ghost, who would dictate to them the answers they must give ; and assurance of salvation, together with the warning that it is by patience that this would be accomplished ; once more they drank in the instruction that our Lord had so often given them before, culminating in the promise : ' He that shall lose his life for Me shall find it.'

And having thus prepared them He put before them the terrible picture of the ruin of the Temple and of the Holy City itself :

' And when you shall see the abomination of desolation, standing where it ought not (he that readeth let him understand) : then let them that are in Judea flee unto the mountains. And let him that is on the house-top not go down into the house nor enter therein to take anything out of the house. And let him that shall be in the field not turn back to take up his garment. And woe to them that are with child and that give suck in those days. But pray ye that these things happen not in winter.' (Mark xiii, 14-18 ; cp. Matt. xxiv, 15-20 ; Luke xxi, 20-23.)

It is in S. Mark, whose version we have quoted, that this prophecy seems to represent most nearly our Lord's words. Veiled and mysterious in character, it reproduces the language of Daniel to express the profanation of the holy place ;<sup>1</sup> a parenthetical note calling the reader's attention to the fact. When they shall see all this coming let the faithful flee : Jerusalem is doomed and they must fly to the

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Lagrange, *L'Evangile de Jésus Christ*, p. 478 : ' S. Luke, who understood the signs of the times, has put in clear terms what in his predecessors remained obscure. It is more especially to these then that we must turn for the oldest traditional form of the Sermon on the Mount, and preferably to S. Mark, who has not mixed it with other elements.' And on Luke xxi, 24 he writes (*ibid.*, p. 482, n. 3) : ' We are very much tempted to say that Luke wrote in the light of subsequent events. Nevertheless if weighty evidence obliges us, as we think it does, to fix the date of the composition of his Gospel and the Acts before the year 70, we may say with great probability that events begin to stand out clearly from that time and that the Christian tradition as to the interpretation of the Sermon as a whole was already fixed.' S. Augustine has already remarked on S. Luke's great precision : ' Lucas evangelista et hanc dierum breviationem, et abominationem desolationis, quæ duo ipse non dicit, sed Matthæus. Marcusque dixerunt, ad eversionem Jerusalem docuit pertinere, alia cum eis dicens apertius de hac eadem re, quæ illi posuerunt obscurius' (epist. 199, quoted by Lagrange, p. 478, n. 2).



mountain, and that as soon as possible, without taking up any time in going home to bring away necessities, not even a cloak. The state of women in pregnancy, or suckling their children, will be peculiarly cruel. The calamity will be worse if it takes place in winter, for in that damp and inclement season it is impossible to pass the night out of doors, and the flight itself would be cut off by the swollen streams. In S. Luke we find the same predictions but with direct reference to Jerusalem only and not specially to the Temple. As a matter of fact, when these events actually took place, warned by our Lord's instructions and urged on by the prophets of the Christian community, the faithful did leave Jerusalem and withdrew to Pella (Eusebius, H.E., III, v, 3).

The picture is completed by the following verses from S. Luke :

'... There shall be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword and shall be led away captives into all nations : and Jerusalem shall be trodden down by the Gentiles till the time of the nations be fulfilled.' (Luke xxi, 23-24.)

After the siege and ruin of the city was to come the massacre and captivity, and the bondage of the Holy City until 'the times of the nations shall be fulfilled.'

The Lord had told His Apostles : 'Unto all nations the Gospel must first be preached' (Matt. xiii, 10). This evangelization of the world was not, however, to take place before the ruin of Jerusalem, but in the interval between this first catastrophe and the end of time. This is the 'times of the nations'<sup>1</sup>; and so between the two planes

<sup>1</sup> Lagrange, R.B., 1906, 405, writes : 'Even if we were not aware that S. Luke had been the disciple of S. Paul, we could only explain these times of the nations in accordance with the teaching of that apostle (Rom. xi, 25), namely, that Israel's rejection permits the entry of the Gentiles into the bosom of the Church.' Godet, 322, shows that if S. Luke alone clearly faces this time of the nations after the fall of Jerusalem 'we may rest assured that the thought thus expressed is in perfect conformity with that of our Lord. Such an idea without any point of contact with past intuitions might have faded or totally disappeared if left to oral tradition alone. S. Luke, possessed of written and therefore more exact testimony, here as in many other cases, has assigned their true purport to our Lord's words. If Christ, who foretold with such precision the date of the destruction of Jerusalem ("this generation"), declared in the same breath that He Himself was ignorant of the day of His own coming, it must infallibly be because He was asserting the existence of a more or less considerable interval between the two events, an interval precisely identical with the period of the Gentiles.'

that divide this perspective of the future between them, Luke gives us a glimpse of a period of indefinite duration, probably of great length.

Then we have another picture, more terrible, universal and inevitable than the first :

‘ For in those days shall be such tribulations as were not from the beginning of the creation which God created until now : neither shall be. And unless the Lord had shortened the days, no flesh should be saved : but, for the sake of the elect which He hath chosen, He hath shortened the days.’ (Mark xiii, 19, 20 ; cp. Matt. xxiv, 21–22.)

The anguish with which we are confronted in this passage is no longer that of Jerusalem and Judea, but of the whole world ; and it has ceased to be possible to take refuge in flight. In the previous case, those who might be surprised by the catastrophe were advised to flee into the mountains, but there is no question of that now, and if Almighty God were not to cut short the agony, all flesh would perish.<sup>1</sup> Once more, we are no longer face to face with the affliction of Judea alone, but of the whole world, whose population is threatened by the cataclysm that has burst upon it.

And in the midst of these frightful calamities fresh temptations will arise ; false Christs and false prophets will raise their heads ‘ and they shall show signs and wonders, to seduce (if it were possible) the very elect ’ (Mark xiii, 22). The same warning occurs in S. Luke in the midst of the ‘ journey narrative ’ :<sup>2</sup>

‘ The days will come when you shall desire to see one day of the Son of Man. And you shall not see it. And they will say to you : See here, and see there. Go ye not after, nor follow them. For as the lightning that lighteneth from under heaven shineth unto the parts

<sup>1</sup> The salvation in question here is not the salvation of the soul, but life itself : R.B., 387 : ‘ It is no longer the faith of the elect that is threatened by calamity ; it is their very life. As in the time of Isaias, there will be a short respite designed to show forth the omnipotence of God who has spared those whom He would.’

<sup>2</sup> In the verses immediately preceding (xvii, 20–21), our Lord answers the Pharisees who have asked Him when the Kingdom of God will come. ‘ The kingdom of God cometh not with observation. Neither shall they say : Behold here or behold there. For lo, the kingdom of God is within you.’ And our Lord goes on with the instruction quoted above.

that are under heaven, so shall the Son of Man be in His day. But first He must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation. And as it came to pass in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man. They did eat and drink, they married wives and were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark and the flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise as it came to pass in the days of Lot. They did eat and drink, they bought and sold, they planted and built. And in the day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of Man shall be revealed. In that hour, he that shall be on the house-top, and his goods in the house, let him not go down to take them away : and he that shall be in the field, in like manner, let him not return back. Remember Lot's wife. Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it : and whosoever shall lose it shall preserve it. I say to you : In that night there shall be two men in one bed. The one shall be taken and the other shall be left. Two women shall be grinding together. The one shall be taken and the other shall be left. Two men shall be in the field. The one shall be taken and the other shall be left. They answering, say to Him : Where, Lord ? Who said to them : Wheresoever the body shall be, thither will the eagles also be gathered together.'<sup>1</sup> (Luke xvii, 22-37.)

<sup>1</sup> In this passage two lines of teaching can be traced : one addressed to the Pharisees, and the other to the disciples themselves. The first had as its subject the kingdom of God, as it was being set up by our Lord by His preaching then and there ; the other, the kingdom that He will establish on His return. As for the former we must not look for its sudden appearance in this place or in that, for it is already within God's people without being observed ; the second will come unexpectedly and will lighten up the whole earth as by a flash. We must not give ear to lying statements. Behold here He is, or there ! For all men will see His coming and will be surprised by it in the middle of their daily tasks. The same prophecy, which is not to be found in this identical position in Matthew or Mark, reappears, like the whole journey narrative in a shorter form in the discourse before us. Lagrange remarks : ' If the hypothesis of two written sources cannot be established in the case of Mark, then the tradition of two discourses . . . is confirmed by the fact that S. Luke has inserted the equivalent of verse 21 in a discourse about the appearance of the Son of Man (xvii, 23). . . . In Matthew, too, there are traces of the double character of the discourse, although he has fused the two elements, since verses 26-28 resume the idea already expressed in verses 23-25, which are parallel to Mark, and develops it with S. Luke in connection with the Parousia. It is impossible that Mark should have been unaware of the fact that in its original meaning the passage referred to the coming of the Son of Man.

We find ourselves suddenly in the midst of the supreme crisis ; the whole world is shaken to its foundations, and the Son of Man appears.

‘ But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened and the moon shall not give her light. And the stars of heaven shall be falling down and the powers that are in heaven shall be moved. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds, with great power and glory. And then shall He send His angels and shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.’ (Mark xiii, 24-27 ; cp. Matt. xxiv, 29-31 ; Luke xxi, 23-25.)

Most of the details in this description are borrowed from the Jewish traditions ;<sup>1</sup> for, as elsewhere, Christ was speak-

If, repeating himself, he puts it here, it is this new situation that he has in view, different from the former referred to in v. 6. It is no longer a question of false Messiahs throwing out hopes of salvation when ruin is at the door. Henceforth the scene is changed. The faithful in the midst of unheard-of calamities await with impatience the coming of Christ, who is, for them, Jesus (i.e., their Saviour). False Christs and false prophets try to seduce them, and by means of prodigies to get themselves accepted as the Christ’ (*S. Marc.* p. 344).

<sup>1</sup> We find reference to supernatural signs in the prophets in connection with happenings incomparably less important than the end of the world. Lagrange (*Messianisme*, 47, 48) writes : ‘ In connection with the capture of Babylon by the Medes we read in Isa. xiii, 9-10 : “ Behold the day of the Lord shall come, a cruel day, and full of indignation and of wrath and fury, to lay the land desolate, and to destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For the stars of heaven and their brightness shall not display their light ; the sun shall be darkened in his rising, and the moon shall not shine with her light.” And in the same book, where the judgement that is due to Edom is mentioned, we are presented with a tableau of all nations and all nature as if the chastisement of Edom were a miniature of the whole world. See, too, Isa. xxxiv, 4-6 : “ And all the host of the heavens shall pine away, and the heavens shall be folded together as a book ; and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth from the vine and from the fig-tree. For my sword is inebriated in heaven : behold it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my slaughter unto judgement. The sword of the Lord is filled with blood. It is made thick with the blood of lambs and buck-goats, with the blood of rams full of marrow : for there is a victim of the Lord in Bosra and a great slaughter in the land of Edom.” The same measures are described in Jeremias (v, 23, 24) in connection with the misfortunes threatening Judea and Jerusalem : “ I beheld the earth, and lo it was void and nothing : and the heavens, and there was no light in them. I looked upon the mountains, and behold they trembled : and all the hills were troubled.” Again in Ezech. xxxii, 7, 8 : all heaven mourns the destruction of Egypt. In the midst of a plague of locusts Joel (ii, 10) writes : “ At their presence, the earth hath trembled, the heavens are moved : the sun and moon are darkened and the stars have withdrawn their shining.” The last example, perhaps, is the most characteristic of all. After that, it is quite natural that hills should gambol

ing the language of His time and country, and there is nothing to prove *a priori* that His words are to be interpreted otherwise than the similar expressions of Isaias, Jeremias, Ezechiel or Joel. Besides, it is to be noticed that Luke, who wrote for readers less accustomed to such language, softens the violence of the expressions and contents himself with predicting 'signs in the sun and in the moon and in the stars.'

The description of the coming of the Son of Man also betrays features borrowed from the book of Daniel :

'I beheld therefore in the vision of the night, and lo, one like the son of man came with the clouds of heaven. And he came even to the Ancient of days : and they presented him before him. And He gave him power and glory and a kingdom : and all peoples, tribes and tongues shall serve him. His power is an everlasting power that shall not be taken away : and his kingdom that shall not be destroyed.' (Dan. vii, 13, 14.)

And similar language is used in the book of Enoch (lxii, 3, 5) : 'In that day all the kings and the mighty ones of the earth shall stand up and shall see and know him as he sits on the throne of his glory ; before him justice will be judged and no vain word will be spoken before him. . . . One half of them will look upon the other half and fear will seize upon them ; they will hold down their heads and grief will come upon them when they see the son of man seated upon the throne of his glory.'

The passages just quoted show that apocalyptic images are capable of being interpreted in various ways ; and cannot by themselves determine with certitude the particular catastrophe described here, which on this data alone might be the ruin of Jerusalem and the Temple and not the consummation of the world. But the uncertainty is removed by what follows, describing the appearance of the Son of Man before whom all the races of the earth lament, and the gathering of the elect from one end of the world to the other. These are the essential elements of the prediction : Christ appears in His glory, and while all the human race recognizes Him with fear, the elect are gathered together by Him,

like lambs when our Lord comes to accomplish the marvels of His mission upon earth. Clearly, it would be a gross misinterpretation to take these images in a literal sense. That would be to misunderstand the style of the Bible, which has usually inspired the apocalyptic literature and furnished the canvas for the verbal pictures there drawn.'

This worldly setting is a secondary affair to these great events, and its traditional features are adopted by Christ as such. But He keeps to the picture, gaining, as we have seen, His inspiration from the descriptions of the prophets, but transforming them at the same time. The personage who appears in Daniel is of indeterminate character 'like the son of man'; while in the book of Enoch the son of man is still more vaguely described, being neither properly speaking a man or a god. If he mingles with men, it is only in that far-off paradise where the just shall become angels. There is nothing in him that recalls the Saviour's humility, sufferings and mercy; nothing that reveals in him the Son of God.<sup>1</sup> But it is quite the contrary here. The Son of Man whose return is foretold is Jesus Himself, a fact of which He will soon be giving still more solemn assurance in His reply to the High Priest. It is this that gives its unshakeable foundation to the Christian hope, expressed in the prayer of the Apocalypse, 'Come, Lord Jesus,' that Christian lips will repeat to the end of the world. Similarly is transformed the prophecy of the gathering together of the elect. The Jews expected and prayed for the reassembling of the scattered tribes of the Diaspora: 'If thou be driven as far as the poles of heaven, the Lord thy God will fetch thee back from thence, and will take thee to Himself' (Deut. xxx, 4). But these whom the Son of Man will gather together will not be the tribes of Israel, but the elect (cp. 2 Thess. ii, 1); and it is this vast multitude of all nations and tribes that the seer of the Apocalypse beheld about the throne of the Lamb (vii, 9).

The sublime picture here traced must have recalled to the disciples' mind the already distant memories of the parables of the lake. Then, in interpreting the parable of the cockle, our Lord had told them:

'The Son of Man shall send His angels: and they shall gather out of His kingdom all scandals and them that work iniquity. And shall cast them into the furnace of fire. There, shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the just shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.' (Matt. xiii, 41-43.)

Here the angels appear as the servants of the Son of Man,

<sup>1</sup> Cp. *Hist. du Dogme de la Trinité*, I, p. 174.

and it is they who, from one end of the world to the other, will gather together the elect.

In bringing this great discourse to an end, Christ returned to the question that had called it forth. The Apostles to whom He had just foretold the destruction of the Temple had asked Him, 'When shall these things be, and what shall be the sign when all these things shall begin to be fulfilled?' and now He tells them :

'Now of the fig-tree learn ye a parable. When the branch thereof is now tender and the leaves are come forth, you know that summer is very near. So you also when you shall see these things come to pass, know ye that it is very nigh, even at the doors. Amen, I say to you that this generation shall not pass until all these things be done. Heaven and earth shall pass away : but My word shall not pass away. But of that day or hour, no man knoweth, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father.' (Mark xiii, 28-32 ; cp. Matt. xxiv, 32-36 ; Luke xxi, 29-33.)

In this, as in many other sections of the discourse, Mark and Matthew's versions are strictly parallel, while Luke's is not so close. In the first place he omits the last verse, in which Jesus declares that the last day is unknown to all, except the Father Himself. As for the earlier happenings of coming catastrophe, just as the appearance of leaves heralds the approach of summer, so in these can be read the fact of the coming of the kingdom of God. It is in the same sense that He says in the previous verse (28) : 'When these things begin to come to pass, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is at hand.' By this liberation of God's people and the coming of His kingdom is meant the fall of Jerusalem and the Temple ; and similarly, in this whole group of verses (28-33), Luke has before him only the first instalment, so to speak, of coming events ; that is, the Jewish catastrophe at Jerusalem, and not the consummation of the world.

It is different in Mark and Matthew, where there are two groups of facts, one of which is as evident as the approach of summer, while the date of the other is a secret of the most mysterious kind. We have here a distinction that we have recognized already, when we remarked above that Christ spoke first of a catastrophe that should take place in Judea,

from which immediate flight into the mountains would be the only means of escape (Mark xiii, 14). He then passed on to speak of a vast calamity that would affect all flesh, and from which no one could take refuge in flight (19, 20); and of the coming of the Son of Man, which would be as sudden as the lightning as it darts from one horizon to another (Matt. xxiv, 27). Here, too, there is question of a catastrophe, to be heralded by premonitory signs, that would fall upon the generation to which Christ spoke; and then of the last day, unknown to all.

And so throughout the whole of this discourse, we are conscious of two sets of facts alternatively unveiled by our Blessed Lord; first, the destruction of Jerusalem and of the Temple, and then the consummation of the world.<sup>1</sup>

For the interpretation of the great eschatological discourse it will be useful to refer to the discussion of De Grandmaison, 'Prophéties de Jésus sur la consommation des choses,' *Jésus Christ*, II, pp. 280-321; to the dissertation of K. Weiss, *Exegetisches zur Irrtumslosigkeit und Eschatologie Jesu Christi* (Münster, 1916), and to Fr. Lagrange's various works, especially *L'Evangile de Jésus Christ*, pp. 473-486. In his previous commentaries (*Marc*, p. 329; *Luc*, p. 536), Fr. Lagrange proposed a very attractive critical solution of the problems involved, which is briefly as follows: The discourse on the coming of the Son of Man is recorded by S. Luke in chapter xvii in a wholly different context. 'Now,' says Father Lagrange, 'if Luke has placed this great (eschatological) discourse in its historical setting, that

<sup>1</sup> This alternation is particularly noticeable in S. Mark. Lagrange, R.B., 393, has made it more apparent by arranging these prophecies in the form of alternate strophe and antistrophe, which answer one another as in the prophetic books. In either part is found this description of the tribulation of that time, 6 . . . 19 . . . ; advice concerning the line of conduct to be pursued, 9 . . . 21 . . . ; the description of the catastrophe, 14 . . . 24 . . . ; and finally a last warning as to the dates of these events; on the one hand a date that can be foreseen and recognized by its signs, 28 . . . ; and on the other a date unknown, when the storm will burst, all unexpected, on the whole race, 32 . . .

We cannot follow this arrangement in every detail, since the two groups of events are not independent of one another; the first group is the anticipated image of the second. We must therefore expect to find the same characteristics in the descriptions of each. Thus, as we have noted above, the features of the ultimate upheaval at the end of time are those upon which the prophecies dwell in describing local disasters, such as the ruin of Babylon or Edom. But in the light of this fact we have to recognize in this great discourse the presence of this double series of predictions; and the latest exegetical research, far from effacing this distinction, has tended to confirm it more and more.



is only what we should expect from his fondness for orderly composition. It follows that it is Matthew who has transferred a part of this discourse to that on the destruction of the Temple. And to go a step further, we may suppose that Mark himself has succeeded very well in fusing the two into one. This hypothesis cuts out the objection from the root.'

This solution is certainly attractive; but we must be careful not to press the assumption behind it too far, assigning to Luke's historical setting a rigidity which, especially in the 'journey narrative,' it does not seem to possess. And we may remark further that Luke himself includes in the second discourse features that manifestly refer to the end of the world, the Parousia, and our Lord's coming on the clouds of heaven (21, 27). But at least it will remain true that the eschatological discourse is found, in chapter xvii, detached from every other element, and that by studying it there we can better distinguish it from the near prospect of the catastrophe at Jerusalem.<sup>1</sup>

A careful study, then, of our Lord's discourse has led us to distinguish the two great events that He foretold: the destruction of the Temple and the end of the world. Between the two there lies apparently a considerable interval, namely the 'times of the Gentiles.' The moral exhortations that form the conclusion of the discourse will help us to realize more clearly how long this interval is to be.

'Take ye heed, watch and pray. For ye know not when the time is. Even as a man who, going into a far country, left his house and gave authority to his servants over every work and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye therefore (for you know not when the lord of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning): lest coming on a sudden, he find you sleeping. And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch.' (Mark xiii, 33-37.)

To our Lord this exhortation to watchfulness is the most important part of His discourse, so He is careful to enlarge

<sup>1</sup> In *L'Evangile de Jésus Christ*, p. 476, Fr. Lagrange has made all necessary reservations concerning this hypothesis. 'If this analysis,' he writes, 'may serve as a reply to critics accustomed to literary dissections of a far bolder character, nevertheless we have denied ourselves the satisfaction of dwelling upon it. The literary agreement of the first three gospels is much too important to be ignored.' Cp. new edition of *S. Marc*, p. 353.

on its significance. According to Mark, He had for His hearers only the four privileged Apostles, but He wishes this great lesson of vigilance : ' Watch ' to reach all His disciples. So He repeats it under a thousand different forms :

' Take heed to yourselves, lest perhaps your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness and the cares of this life : and that day come upon you suddenly. For as a snare shall it come upon all that sit upon the face of the whole earth. Watch ye, therefore, praying at all times, that you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that are to come and to stand before the Son of Man.' (Luke xxi, 34-36.)

It is the same counsel that we find in S. Mark, but, as usual, Luke attaches particular importance to the absence of material cares, to liberty of heart, and to prayer. Matthew has developed these warnings at much greater length, and, following his usual method, he has here gathered together all the teachings of Christ relating to the subject in hand, concluding with the following pregnant parable which, as a matter of fact, has profoundly impressed the Christian conscience in every age :

' Who, thinkest thou, is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath appointed over his family, to give them meat in season ? Blessed is that servant, whom when his lord shall come he shall find so doing. Amen I say to you : He shall place him over all his goods. But if that evil servant shall say in his heart : My lord is long a-coming : and shall begin to strike his fellow-servants and shall eat and drink with drunkards : the lord of that servant shall come in a day that he hopeth not and at an hour that he knoweth not : and shall separate him and appoint his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' (Matt. xxiv, 45-51 ; cp. Luke xii, 42-46.)

This short parable can be applied to all Christians, but it is aimed more directly at the Apostles, who are they that have been set by the Lord over the whole house and charged with the distribution of His people's food. What Christ is especially urging upon them is to be ready at every moment, and to drive home the lesson He appeals to their experience of daily life. In the dead of night, thieves pierce the mud

walls of the houses of that period ; a thing that the master of the house would never have allowed to happen if he had only known what time they would come. This warning is graven on the Christian conscience. 'But you, brethren,' writes S. Paul to the Thessalonians (1, v, 4), 'are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief ; for all you are the children of light and children of the day.' And in 2 Peter iii, 10, we read : 'The day of the Lord shall come as a thief.' And in the Apocalypse iii, 3 : 'If then thou shalt not watch, I will come to thee as a thief : and thou shalt not know at what hour I will come to thee.' And in xvi, 15 : 'Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.'

But what strikes us most in this parable is the wicked servant's reflection : 'My lord is long a-coming' ; whereupon he began to strike his fellow-servants and to give himself over to carousing with companions of the worst kind. On this subject Billot writes<sup>1</sup> : 'My Lord is long a-coming. . . . It is a strange reason and it has not found its way here by chance. It is the reason of an unbeliever who absolutely mocks at the idea of the Lord's coming but whose incredulity veils itself in an ironical comment on His delay. . . . Such are those of whom S. Peter speaks in his second epistle : "Knowing this first : That in the last days there shall come deceitful scoffers, walking after their own lusts, saying : Where is His promise of His coming ? For since the time that the fathers slept, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation" (2 Peter iii, 3, 4). All this, with much more than it is easy to imagine, lurks in the irony of these words : *moram facit dominus meus venire !*'

We find the same teaching in the parable of the Ten Virgins (Matt. xxv, 1-13). The main theme of the parable can be followed easily enough.<sup>2</sup> A marriage was generally celebrated in the evening. The bridegroom and his companions arrived before the bride, to the sound of music and in the blaze of lights. The bride, similarly attended, left her father's house, met the bridegroom and was led by him to what was to be their common abode. This is where the ten virgins with their lamps intervened. 'In the country of

<sup>1</sup> *La Parousie*, p. 172.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. Billerbeck, I, pp. 500-18.

Ismael it was the custom to conduct the bride from her father's house to that of the bridegroom : preceded by about ten wooden torches supporting little vessels like saucers, with wicks made of cloth, steeped in a little oil and pitch.<sup>1</sup>

We can imagine that lamps like these would hold only a very little oil, a fact remembered by the wise virgins who brought a spare vessel of oil with them ; on the other hand, the foolish virgins remarked that since the company would arrive almost at once there was no need to make provision to such an extent. However, the bridegroom tarried. We find here the same warning as in the preceding parable : the delay was so long that the virgins, wise as well as foolish, slept. Still, there was no complaint made against them on this ground, and those who were excluded from the marriage feast were so excluded, not because they slept, but for not being duly prepared before their sleep. The sleep is death ; and the bridegroom of the parable, Christ, the supreme judge. At the last day the foolish virgins will come and knock at the door, and in tones full of anguish will cry : ' Lord, Lord, open to us.' But He will answer them : ' Amen, I say to you, I know you not.' It is always the same teaching, the same watchword constantly renewed : ' Watch.'

While listening to these last exhortations, the Apostles would have recalled the former teaching recorded by Luke, in his ' journey narrative ' :

' Let your loins be girt and lamps burning in your hands. And you yourselves like to men who wait for their lord, when he shall return from the wedding ; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open to him immediately.' (Luke xii, 35, 36.)

' But when the master of the house shall be gone in and shall shut the door, you shall begin to stand without and knock at the door, saying : Lord, open to us. And he answering, shall say to you : I know you not, whence you are. Then you shall begin to say : We have eaten and drunk in thy presence : and thou hast taught in our streets. And he shall say to you : I know you not, whence you are. Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity.' (Luke xiii, 25-27.)

The resemblance to the teaching of the parable we have

<sup>1</sup> Raschi on *Kelim*, II, 8, quoted by Billerbeck, I, p. 969.

just considered is clear, but we must remark that during His last few days on earth Christ insists more and more on the long delays that will precede His return.

Once more we have the same lesson in the parable of the talents, recorded by S. Matthew here and already commented on by us when comparing it with the parable of the pounds, found only in S. Luke. Here we only notice our Lord's reiterated teaching about His return. After telling the story of the man who went on a voyage and entrusted his silver to his servants' care, He goes on (xxv, 19) : 'After a long time the lord of those servants came and reckoned with them.' A clear purpose runs through all these variations, and we must return to it very soon ; but let us finish the reading of the chapter first :

'And when the Son of Man shall come in His majesty, and all the angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the seat of His majesty. And all nations shall be gathered together before Him : and He shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats : And He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on His left. Then shall the King say to them that shall be on His right hand : Come, ye blessed of My Father, possess you the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave Me to eat : I was thirsty, and you gave Me to drink : I was a stranger, and you took Me in : naked, and you covered Me : sick, and you visited Me : I was in prison, and you came to Me. Then shall the just answer Him, saying : Lord, when did we see Thee hungry and fed Thee : thirsty, and gave Thee drink ? And when did we see Thee a stranger and took Thee in ? Or naked and covered Thee ? Or when did we see Thee sick or in prison and came to Thee ? And the King answering shall say to them : Amen I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these My least brethren, you did it to Me. Then He shall say to them also that shall be on His left hand : Depart from Me, you cursed, into everlasting fire, which was prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry, and you gave Me not to eat : I was thirsty, and you gave Me not to drink. I was a stranger, and you took Me not in : naked, and you covered Me not : sick and in prison, and you did not visit Me. Then they

also shall answer Him, saying : Lord, when did we see Thee hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister to Thee ? Then He shall answer them, saying : Amen I say to you, as long as you did it not to one of these least, neither did you do it to Me. And these shall go into everlasting punishment : but the just, into life everlasting.' (Matt. xxv, 31-46.)

This stupendous scene forms the conclusion of the eschatological prophecies of our Lord. The future destiny of the world has been sketched in a few bold lines from the point of view of the propagation of the Gospel, the only one that matters from the standpoint of eternity. The kingdom of Christ will be preached to every nation throughout the whole world. Then will the Son of Man suddenly appear, and He will judge the world. In this final judgement all nations and angels will assemble before His throne. Long before Christ, Judaism looked for the visitation of God, for His coming in majesty, and for the judgement that He would exercise here below. But this function of universal judge was too Divine a prerogative to be delegated to His Messias : 'In the same way,' it was said, 'that God has created alone and not by another, so He will judge alone and not by another.' Only in the Parables of Enoch is the judge's rôle given to the Messias, and then it is not a universal judgement that He has to carry out.<sup>1</sup> Our Lord claims this Divine office for Himself ; and, what is perhaps more remarkable still, He offers Himself to all men, just and sinners alike, as the aim of their whole moral life : it is according to their relations with Christ that all men will be saved or lost. If they have loved and cherished Him they are among the sheep, destined for the eternal paradise ; if not, they are goats, doomed to eternal pains. By this double prerogative of being, at the same time, Judge of men and their last End, the Person of Christ appears to us in a majesty manifestly Divine.

But this is not the only lesson that this great prophecy has to teach : it shows us, too, that the service of Christ, on which depends all the moral worth and eternal happiness of men, is the service of our neighbour, too. 'As long as you did it to one of these, My least brethren, you did it to Me.' These words of the Judge will be a revelation for all ;

<sup>1</sup> Cp. *Histoire du Dogme de la Trinité*, I, pp. 283 ff.

both for the beneficent just and the pitiless wicked ; for those who have helped the needy, equally with those who have despised them, will give place to the Son of Man, the Judge of all, and in every cause. Here, more than anywhere else, we see how the Son of Man sums up all humanity in Himself, how He is charged with its miseries, not only that He may take His share, but that He may suffer for those of each of us as well, and claim for each of us his neighbour's help. Two days later, after the Last Supper, He would say to His Apostles :

‘ A new commandment I give unto you : That you love one another, as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love one for another.’ (John xiii, 34, 35.)

By these words our Lord would crown the teaching of His whole life. From the Sermon on the Mount onwards, what He had preached above all else had been the love of all, and particularly of enemies ; the forgiveness of injuries, in imitation of the Heavenly Father who sends His sun and rain on good and bad alike ; and according as this pardon is granted or refused, so will it be with God's forgiveness of ourselves. Many times in His parables He had repeated the same teaching again and again ; and often in the teachings of the last few months He had shown that all the law and the prophets is summed up in these two commandments, to love God and our neighbour ; that these two commandments are alike, and closely linked, one to another.<sup>1</sup> But all such teaching is less expressive than the judgement scene which Christ here, so to speak, sets before our very eyes : putting Himself in the place of the least amongst us, He claims our succour for Himself. Having received all from Him, having everything to fear from Him, can we refuse the humble services that He asks ?

Thus are men divided—sheep and goats. All the preceding parables have already given us a glimpse of this terrible sentence which must for ever put humanity in two camps,

<sup>1</sup> Later S. John was to repeat the same teaching : ‘ If any man say : I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar. For he that loveth not his brother whom he seeth, how can he love God whom he seeth not ? And this commandment we have from God, that he who loveth God love also his brother ’ (I John iv, 20–21).

the evil and the good. So were condemned the murderous husbandmen (Matt. xxi, 41) ; so was the guest without a wedding garment cast, bound hand and foot, into the exterior darkness (xxii, 13) ; so was the wicked servant, surprised by his master, cut off and given over to weeping and gnashing of teeth (xxiv, 51). So again were the wise virgins brought into the wedding feast, and the foolish ones left outside (xxv, 12) ; the faithful depositaries, who had increased their talents, made to enter into the joy of their Lord, and the idle and useless servant deprived of everything and cast into the exterior darkness, too (xxv, 21-23, 28-30). And here we have the same lesson once more. Some Protestant theologians have found here a cause of offence, being unable to understand how, 'morally speaking, there are only two classes of men, separated by an impassable gulf, and without intermediate gradation of any kind.' Reuss, who raises this objection in his commentary (p. 617), renews it in his *Théologie chrétienne* (I, 249) : 'Are men's works so universally imperfect and full of defects, to bring about a separation so complete that the least culpable of the reprobate will be severed—and that for ever—by an impassable gulf, from the least meritorious of the elect?' This objection misses the essential difference, between a grave fault, and works simply 'imperfect and full of defects.' Still, it contains a partial truth that we have no difficulty in acknowledging. It is too true that our works are universally imperfect and defective ; and if, through all eternity, the just had to bear the stain that such imperfections bring, we should have to recognize in this division of men into two classes an abstract simplification corresponding ill with the complexities of real life. But we believe in Purgatory. These just souls, although laden with so many imperfections and faults, will, after death, be purged of them by Almighty God, and when they present themselves before Him, they will be truly without stain. So are they in truth the blessed of the Father, whom Christ introduces into His paradise above. Absolute and indelible is the difference between them and the damned. No doubt many would like to say, with Renan, that the difference between good and evil, true and false, lies only in a series of imperceptible shades, like those on a dove's neck. Not so can a Christian speak. His yes is yes, and his no, no. 'He who is not with Me is against Me,' said our Lord.



More are dismayed at the eternal perspectives here opened by our Lord. So are we, but that does not hide them from our sight. And if we do shut our eyes to them, the Gospel teaching will be true, just the same. 'These (the wicked) shall go into everlasting punishment, but the just into life everlasting.' Equally eternal is the destiny of both ; if we wish to snatch the damned from their pains, so must we the elect from their eternal life.<sup>1</sup> At least let us observe the terms used by Christ to distinguish the fate of each. For the just it is the kingdom prepared for them from the beginning of the world ; for the wicked, the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. So it is for His children that God has prepared His kingdom, from the foundation of the world ; but Hell has not been made for guilty men, but for the devil himself. Let not men make themselves the accomplices of the devil here below ; then in no wise will they be companions of his torments later on.<sup>2</sup>

We have reached the end of the public teaching of our Lord, and we have just finished reading afresh all that concerns the coming of the kingdom of God, the parousia of the Son of Man, and the end of the world. Over this we must still linger, for the subject is of capital importance and Christ's teaching about it has often been misunderstood. Thus Renan wrote (*Vie de Jésus*, c. 17) : 'His declarations of the nearness of the final catastrophe leave room for no sort of equivocation. The present generation, He assured His hearers, would not pass until all these things were fulfilled. . . . These formal assurances were the preoccupation

<sup>1</sup> In this connection may be read the words of Charles Gore in commenting on Luke ix, 51-6 (*A New Commentary on Holy Scripture*, pp. 222 ff.) : 'It is very important that we should consider what sort of judicial or punitive action it is which our Lord repudiates : it is the demanding Divine vengeance on our adversaries ; in Elijah's case, innocent people. But our Lord does not repudiate all idea of Divine judgement, and He pronounces tremendous judgements Himself on those whom He recognizes as the real and deliberate adversaries of God. There is a sort of Neo-Marcionism much in fashion to-day which would have us think of judgement and wrath as altogether alien to God—an idea which is quite alien to the New Testament.'

<sup>2</sup> In commenting on Matt. xxv, 31-46, in the same commentary (p. 196) Levertoff-Goudge interprets the judgement scene as follows : from xxiv, 42 to xxv, 30 the parousia is considered in relation to the Church. In xxv, 31-46 there is no longer question of the Church but the heathen ; the justice meted out to them depending upon their attitude towards the humblest members of the Church. This interpretation does violence to the text ; it is the whole of mankind that is judged by Christ, and the judgement is motivated by the disposition of each man, not specifically towards Christians but simply towards his neighbour.

of the Christian family for nearly seventy years. . . . If the first Christian generation had a deep and constant faith, it was because the world was on the point of coming to an end, and the great revelation of Christ was soon to take place. . . .’ During many years, and especially after J. Weiss’ book on the kingdom of God, these theses have been ever more imperiously maintained ; all the exegesis of Loisy has been long dominated by them, so much so that at the end of his introduction (p. 252) he thought it possible thus to sum up our Lord’s career : ‘ The career and teaching of Jesus was the grain of mustard seed that became a tree ; the lump of leaven that caused the whole mass to ferment. Nothing apparently more insignificant could be conceived : a village workman, simple and enthusiastic, who believed in the speedy coming of the end of the world, the inauguration of a reign of justice, and the coming of God upon the earth, and who, strong in this initial illusion, ascribed to himself the principal rôle in the organization of this city of dreams. Then he took up the part of a prophet, inviting all his fellow-countrymen to repent of their sins, so as to conciliate the great judge, whose coming was imminent and would be like that of a thief in the night. He recruited a small number of unlettered followers, being scarcely able to find any others, and stirred up an agitation—not very deep, however—in popular circles. He was bound to be promptly arrested by the competent authorities, and he was ; he could not hope to escape a violent death, nor did he.’<sup>1</sup>

If we could avoid being saddened by the blasphemies of this passage, we should be shocked by its contradictions, and by the nonsense it makes of the interpretation of the Gospels. Loisy recalls the parables of the mustard seed and the leaven, and he is right : these symbols, created by Jesus Himself, most surely reveal His thought. But this thought is the precise contrary of everything we find here. The kingdom of heaven is like a seed that man casts into the earth, where he leaves it to its natural vital force, and the action of Almighty God. Meanwhile he goes about his affairs, sleeps and wakes again, and the seed grows without him knowing how, bringing forth of itself, first the stalk, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear ; then at last all is ripe for the harvest and the sickle is brought into use.

<sup>1</sup> *Les Evangiles Synoptiques*, I, p. 252.

The kingdom of God is like a grain of mustard seed, the smallest of all the seeds, but from it springs a great tree, a shelter for the birds of the air. The kingdom of heaven is like leaven which a woman takes to knead into three measures of meal until it leavens the whole paste.

The setting of these parables was no matter of chance ; they all have one and the same meaning. The kingdom of God is to develop with power, but slowly and progressively, as living beings do. Here is no sudden transformation, but a progressive evolution, invading and transforming all, almost unnoticed by men. It was what Christ was to say directly, and without any parable to the Pharisees, when they asked Him when the kingdom of God was to come. 'The kingdom of God cometh not with observation, neither shall they say behold here, or behold there. For lo, the kingdom of God is within you.' It was to counteract attacks of impatience that He set before His Galilean hearers the parable of the cockle. 'Wilt thou that we go and gather it up?' said the servants. 'No,' was the reply, 'suffer both wheat and cockle to grow until the harvest, and in the time of the harvest they will separate the wheat and the cockle.'

This long-suffering patience is the law of the Heavenly Father's providence with regard to the progress of individuals as they approach nearer and nearer to the kingdom of God. But it appears still more clearly in the gradual transformation of the world ; there also are to be applied the Gospel parables of the seed and the wheat. Christ has lodged these vital forces in the human soul ; He is sure of their final triumph ; but He awaits it without any impatience at all. The instructions that He gave His Apostles when sending them on their first preaching mission show very clearly that it was as yet only a question of taking a first step on a road which will be found long indeed. They will go neither to Samaritans nor Gentiles, as yet, but only to the lost sheep of Israel (Matt. x, 5) ; but the Gentiles will have their time (Luke xxi, 24) ; and when it comes they will enter the kingdom, too. 'To-day they burn the visible sanctuary of Jerusalem ; soon they will come and gather around the sanctuary not made with hands (Mark xiv, 58), which is to take its place and against which the gates of Hell itself will not prevail (Matt. xvi, 18). The victory is assured, the enemy has already fallen from heaven, and has

no longer the power to arrest the movement which is to end in his complete overthrow (Luke x, 17).<sup>1</sup>

We know all these facts well enough, and they form a consistent whole which is part of the warp and woof of the Gospel itself. And patently it is the same thought that we find in the teaching of this last week. On the eve of the entry into Jerusalem we find it in the parable of the pounds, the meaning of which is given to us by Luke (xix, 11) : ' . . . He added and spoke a parable, because He was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately be manifested.' With even greater emphasis, Matthew records the same warning in the parable of the servants : ' My Master is long a coming ' (xxiv, 48) ; in that of the ten virgins : ' And the bridegroom tarrying they all slumbered and slept ' (xxv, 5) ; in that of the talents : ' . . . After a long time the lord of those servants came ' (xxv, 19) ; nor can we see the hand of a redactor in significant touches like these. Not a detail has been thrown in by chance ; on the contrary this delay is supposed by the whole trend of the parable itself. It is because the Master tarries that the servants fight among themselves ; because the Bridegroom is late that the virgins sleep ; because the owner of the property delays that the depositaries have leisure to use or waste the talents they have received in trust. All these parables repeat the same lesson ; Christ's return is something for which men have to wait, and His servants must see to it that they do so with constancy and vigilance alike.

Finally, we are led to the same conclusion by the eschatological discourse itself. The fall of Jerusalem and the Temple was near at hand, but that was in no sense the consummation of the world. Men could see this first catastrophe coming, and, taking refuge in the mountains, could thus escape by flight. But the other will burst suddenly on the world, at a date unknown to all ; it will be like a great cast of the net, enveloping the whole human race. More than that, between these two great events a long delay will be necessary, that the time of the nations may be fulfilled.

All these facts are fundamental and authentic, but, after all, a difficulty remains. It is certain that, in the apostolic age, there was a widespread belief in the imminent return

<sup>1</sup> Reuss, *Théol. chrét.*, I, 259-260.

of Christ ; and, it may well be asked, where did that belief come from, if not from the teaching of Christ Himself ?

In replying to this difficulty, we must first call attention to the state of mind of the Jews at the time of our Lord. A certain number of them, and notably the Sadducees, had relinquished messianic hopes altogether. On these we have no need to dwell ; they were unrepresented in the Church, and if any of them did become Christians, it was after being converted to a messianic faith. This hope of the Messiah was the very soul of Christianity, so much so that S. Paul could say : ' Because that for the hope of Israel, I am bound with this chain ' (Acts xxviii, 20). Now, at this period, even before our Lord's coming, the messianic hope was, for the most part, impatient in character ; those swayed by it believed themselves on the eve of the great manifestation awaited so long, and there was no question of distinguishing the different comings of Christ. No sooner had John the Baptist begun to preach, than they asked him : ' Art thou he that is to come ? ' ' Art thou the prophet ? ' ' Art thou the Christ ? ' And when Jesus began to reveal Himself as the Messiah the initial confusion became clear. He was asked for a sign from heaven, that is, for that dazzling apparition that all looked for as the proper manifestation of the Messiah ; even the Apostles betrayed impatience from time to time, and up to the very day of the ascension itself : ' . . . Wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel ? ' was the question they asked, even so late in the day as that.

To such impatience Jesus was content to reply : ' It is not for you to know the times or moments, which the Father hath put in His own power ' (Acts i, 7). In spite of its reserve this answer could still supply the eager enthusiasm necessary to lead the Christian world to an expectation of the Master's coming. Our Lord in no way destroyed this, nor did He wish to. He wanted to keep in full play the fervour of His whole Church and of each of His disciples in particular. He wished the spirit of watchfulness, that He constantly preached, to be the law of the whole human race, and of each individual as well. For most men, indeed, the parousia was bound to be a far-distant event ; but Christ's return to each at the moment of His death was a thing near in every case, and to be expected at any time.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> S. Augustine, ep. 199, 2, 3, tr. Billot, *La Parousie*, 141 : ' What is to be feared on the last day, in so far as it is to come on the ungodly

Indubitably, this personal aspect of the matter is found in certain of the parables, such as that of the rich fool (Luke xii, 20) : 'Thou fool, this night do they require thy soul of thee and whose shall these things be which thou hast provided ?'<sup>1</sup>

This application to individuals of our Lord's warnings helps to explain His urgency in giving them ; but, as we have already said, another even stronger reason comes in. Christ wished to leave His Church uncertain as to the last day, so that it might always live in the expectation and hope of His return. When explaining the Sermon on the Mount and the Our Father, we remarked with what fervour the Fathers repeated from age to age : 'Thy kingdom come, the redemption of Thy children, the humiliation of Thy enemies, the unity and consummation of the saints !' And these aspirations are the more ardent because the date of their realization is unknown. In his book on *L'espérance du salut au début de l'ère chrétienne*, Fr. d'Alès writes (p. 236) : 'It is no less true that early Christian literature gives an impression of a general belief in the imminence of the last day, or, as it was then called, the parousia of Christ. Indeed the Apostles helped to spread it, not deliberately, for, once

like a thief, ought to be dreaded by each of us on the last day of his life, and for the same reason. For in whatever state each soul finds itself on the day of death, in that state will it be found on the last day of the world, and as it dies on the one, so will it be judged on the other. To this is to be referred that which is written in the Gospel of S. Mark : " Watch you, therefore (for you know not when the Lord of the house cometh, at even or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning), lest coming on a sudden, He find you sleeping. And what I say to you, I say to all : Watch." For who are these " all " to whom He speaks, if not all His faithful, all the members of His mystical body which is the Church, in a word, all Christians ? So He did not speak only to those who were listening to Him at the moment, but to us who are come after them, as He spoke to those who will come after us, up to the day of His own last coming. But how then ? Will it be that this day will find them all living upon the earth, or that, perchance, it is to those also who lie in their tombs that may be applied these words : " Watch, lest coming on a sudden, the Master find you sleeping ? " Why then say to all what evidently can only apply to those who are alive at the last day ? Why, once more why, if not because contemporaries of that day all must in effect be, in the way that I have said ? For then truly will arrive for each one the last day, when the moment comes for him to leave the world, in the state, from henceforth fixed and immovable, in which he will be judged on that other day. Therefore every Christian ought to watch that the coming of the Lord may not find him unprepared ; but unprepared at the last day will be found everyone who is found unprepared at the last day of his life.'

<sup>1</sup> Reuss finds it also in several passages of the eschatological discourse (*Th. chr.*, I, 254) : 'The hour of death is uncertain ; it will come unexpectedly like a thief in the night ; but it will come without fail ; the Lord

again, they refrained from teaching what they themselves did not know ; but mainly by the energy of their exhortations, and also by their silence. Around them, and, under the influence of their words, current ideas grew up, of which they were not the authors in any direct sense. . . . And they were only bound to oppose them, in so far as they menaced the faith or Christian life of the churches under their care.'

And what can rightly be said of the Apostles, can and ought to be applied, with certain reservations, to Christ Himself. He, whose knowledge was universal and infallible, willed, none the less, to tell His disciples that He was ignorant of this day which was known only to the Father, in order that He might make them understand clearly that the date in question was always to remain an impenetrable mystery, even for Holy Church herself.<sup>1</sup> At the same time He was for ever urging them to be ready. These exhortations and uncertainties falling upon souls already obsessed by impatience for the last day, and wholly possessed with the desire to see their Master once again, were bound to develop these aspirations of which the ancient Christian literature is full. 'Come, Lord Jesus !' It is the cry of the Church that rings out in the last verse of the Apocalypse, and echoes across the history of the world. Men, alas, are only too prone to forget heavenly vistas in their desire to establish themselves definitely here below ; and there was only too good reason to fear that if the faithful ceased to expect the prompt return of Christ, they would come to hope that that return might be delayed, and at last that it might never take place at all. This abandonment of Christian hopes would be the very death of Christianity itself, involving the irremediable decay of the Church. Then would be seen the fulfilment of our Lord's words, His servants fighting among themselves, or giving themselves over to enjoyment, with the boast : 'The Master is long

will visit His servants ; happy those who shall be prepared to receive Him ! Death strikes, now one, now another, and no human calculations can determine who will be the next to be called before his judge. The external condition of two individuals might be precisely the same, but that would not have the slightest influence on the moment of their death. One will be taken and the other left ; and no one can say the day, or which will go first. Watch then, says our Lord ; be on your guard. . . . This exhortation is addressed to all, and not exclusively to those of any particular or distinctive period.'

<sup>1</sup> On this ignorance of the last day, cp. *Origines du Dogme de la Trinité*, note C, pp. 559-90.

a coming : He will come no more.' Such servants indeed, lacking faith and hope, we shall always find. But ever against them stand the faithful ones, who with loins girded and torch aglow, await without faltering through the long night, the return for which they hope : 'Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.'



## CHAPTER VI

### THE LAST SUPPER. INSTITUTION OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST. THE DISCOURSE AFTER THE SUPPER

#### *I. The Date of the Last Supper.*

THESE discourses on the return of the Son of Man and the Judgement are the last public utterances of our Lord ; they were the last warnings that He gave. During the two days that He still had to live, He would confine Himself to the inner circle of His own disciples, appearing no more in public except for His condemnation and death.

These last events in Jesus' life are of decisive importance in the history of our redemption. So we find them recorded by the four evangelists with a detail and precision that we find nowhere else. We can see how, from the very beginning, the apostolic catechesis, the source of our Synoptic Gospels, aimed at engraving all the details of this story on the Christian mind. And we find the same concern in S. John. He who generally leaves out of his picture the facts already related by the Synoptics, here sets himself to re-tell, in his turn, and with the greatest possible detail, what Jesus said and did during those last days. The only exception is the institution of the Holy Eucharist. He had already recorded at length the discourse on the Bread of Life, at Capharnaum, and he judged it superfluous to repeat here what had been already related by the synoptical writers, but he wished to fill up the gaps in their narrative by describing the washing of the feet, and recording the discourse after the Supper at length. All that follows, and that, properly speaking, constitutes the history of the Passion, from the Garden of Olives to Calvary, is related by all four evangelists with a parallelism closer here than is found in the whole story of the life of Christ.

This exceptional multiplicity and abundance of sources is, for the Christian, a treasure-trove. Perhaps, for the historian, it is an embarrassment, at times. We have noticed on many occasions in this history that each of the

evangelists had followed his own path in independence of the others. No doubt the simple, straightforward assurance of this method is for the historian a precious guarantee, bringing him into contact with certain facts, set forth in perfect good faith, and evidently without fear of any supervision from outside. In fact any anxiety on the part of the author to bring himself into agreement with other witnesses would have aroused suspicions of a legitimate kind. Here is an advantage of the first order, lightly bought by any embarrassments it may cause us on other grounds. But we must acknowledge such embarrassments when we meet them ; and they are particularly appreciable in the history of the Last Supper, and of the Passion itself.

A first difficulty arises at once, in relation to the date of our Lord's death. To follow the brief discussion necessary on this point we must recall some elements in the Jewish calendar. In the Christian Church the celebrations connected with Easter take place always on the same days of the week ; that of our Lord's death on Friday, and His Resurrection on Sunday. This custom, which was a subject of discussion in the second century, in Pope Victor's time, has been universal ever since. On the other hand, among the Jews the celebration of the Passover is always fixed for the same day of the month ; the great feast always falling on the 15th Nisan, whatever day of the week that may happen to be. Further, we must remember that, in Jewish usage, the day commences in the evening, at sunset ; so the evening following the 14th Nisan belonged already to the 15th and to the feast. Finally, it will be remembered that the Jewish months are precisely lunar months. With us the first of the New Moon may fall on any day of the month, but with the Jews it is by definition the first day of the month ; so the Passover is the fifteenth day of the Paschal Moon.

Having remarked this much, we must add that there is no doubt that Jesus died on a Friday.<sup>1</sup> But the question is whether this Friday was the 14th or 15th Nisan. To clear this up let us re-read the passage of Exodus in which the details of the Passover celebrations are laid down :

‘ On the tenth day of this month let every man take a lamb by their families and houses. But if the number be

<sup>1</sup> This point has been definitely established ; *supra*, vol. I, p. xxxi.

less than may suffice to eat the lamb, he shall take unto him his neighbour that joineth to his house, according to the number of souls which may be enough to eat the lamb. And it shall be a lamb without blemish, a male, of one year : according to which rite also you shall take a kid. And you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month : and the whole multitude of the children of Israel shall sacrifice it in the evening. And they shall take of the blood thereof, and put it upon both the side posts, and on the upper door posts of the house, wherein they shall eat it. And they shall eat the flesh that night roasted at the fire : and unleavened bread with wild lettuce. You shall not eat thereof any thing raw, nor boiled in water, but only roasted at the fire. You shall eat the head with the feet and entrails thereof. Neither shall there remain any thing of it until morning. If there be any thing left, you shall burn it with fire. And thus you shall eat it : You shall gird your reins, and you shall have shoes on your feet, holding staves in your hands, and you shall eat in haste ; for it is the Phase (that is the Passage) of the Lord. And I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and will kill every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast : and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgements. I am the Lord. And the blood shall be unto you for a sign in the houses where you shall be : and I shall see the blood, and shall pass over you. And the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I shall strike the land of Egypt. And this day shall be for a memorial to you : and you shall keep it a feast to the Lord in your generations with an everlasting observance. Seven days shall you eat unleavened bread. In the first day there shall be no leaven in your houses : whosoever shall eat any thing leavened, from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall perish out of Israel. The first day shall be holy and solemn, and the seventh day shall be kept with the like solemnity : you shall do no work in them, except those things that belong to eating.' (Exodus xii, 3-16.)

The great feast, therefore, was on the fifteenth day of the month. In accordance with the usual Jewish usage it commenced the night before ; and it was on this eve that the paschal lamb was consumed.

Now the difficulty is this : on the one hand the Synoptic narratives represent the Last Supper celebrated by Jesus with His Apostles as being the paschal meal ; on the other, S. John clearly asserts that the day of the paschal meal was the day on which Jesus was slain. According to the Synoptics, then, Christ died on the 15th Nisan ; according to S. John, on the 14th.

In our study of the chronology of our Lord's life (*supra*, vol. I, p. xxxii), we have shown that the passages to be quoted from S. John are decisive, and that even in the Synoptics themselves there are certain points which lead us to think that Jesus died on a working day, which consequently was not the great day of the feast.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, the date of 14th Nisan, which is forced upon our acceptance by S. John,<sup>2</sup> is also suggested by certain details of the Synoptic gospels and, together with most historians, we have no wish to investigate further on that particular point.

But from this arises another problem, by no means easily solved, i.e. : Was the Last Supper a paschal meal ? And if so, how can we explain the fact that Jesus ate the Pasch the night before His death, while the Pharisees ate it the next day ; in other words, on the evening of the day when Jesus died ? (John xviii, 28).

Before discussing this question, it may be useful to remind ourselves of what the paschal meal consisted in our Lord's time. Here is the description as given in the Mishnah, *Pesachim*, x (ed. Beer, pp. 186 ff.) :

On the eve of the pasch, from about the hour of Minchah, nothing must be eaten before the night. Even the poor in Israel must eat nothing before they come to the table. Not less than four cups of wine must be supplied, even if it be necessary to have recourse to the poor fund for this.

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Lagrange, *S. Marc*, p. 356 : ' And we may confidently assert that in the Synoptics the day of the Passion was not a holiday, since Simon of Cyrene returned from the fields, that is, probably from his work (Mark xv, 21 ; Matt. xxvii, 32 ; Luke xxiii, 26) ; and since it was possible to purchase a winding sheet (Mark xv, 46) ; and to prepare spices (Luke xxiii, 56) ; and that not only the guards, but a disciple too, were armed (Mark xiv, 47). These points of agreement of the Synoptics with John, which are, so to speak, under the surface, are only the more characteristic for that.'

<sup>2</sup> Fr. Tillmann, *Das Johannesevangelium* (Bonn, 1931), thinks it possible to get rid of the apparent contradiction between John and the Synoptics by interpreting John xviii, 28, not of the eating of the paschal lamb, but of an ordinary meal at Paschal-tide. Hence, he thinks, there is nothing in John inconsistent with the date 15 Nisan (pp. 310-311). This interpretation does not seem to us to be tenable.

When the first cup is poured out, according to the disciples of Shammai, first the blessing of the day is pronounced, and then that of the wine; but according to the followers of Hillel, the reverse order is to be observed. This is brought before those present (the entry), while the lettuce is left to soak in the sauce until the beginning of the meal. Then the unleavened bread is brought forward, with the lettuce and the sauce to moisten it, but the sauce is not obligatory, although Rabbi Eleazar ben Rabbi Sadduc says that it is. When the Temple was still standing the paschal lamb was brought in. The second cup is poured out, and then the son asks the father the traditional questions . . . and the Hallel is sung as far as: 'Blessed art Thou, Jehovah, Saviour of Israel.'

Then the third cup is poured out, and the blessing on the meal pronounced; then the fourth; the Hallel is finished and the Blessing intoned. Between the cups anyone may drink, if they so wish, but not between the third and fourth cup. Those present are not dismissed. After the paschal meal comes the aphiqomen. If anyone falls asleep the others may go on eating, but not if all have slept.<sup>1</sup>

If we compare this description with the Synoptic narratives, it is difficult to work out an agreement between the two accounts. Those exegetes who have tried to distinguish within the Gospel accounts the various stages in the paschal meal, have nothing better than conjectures to propose; and those historians who think that Christ did not celebrate the Passover naturally stress the difficulties involved. On the other hand, the Synoptics reproduce features the significance of which it is impossible to misunderstand. It is certain that Peter and John were sent to Jerusalem to prepare the Passover (Mark xiv, 12; Matt. xxvi, 17; Luke xxii, 7); the meal that follows is certainly the paschal meal that they had prepared (Mark xiv, 17; Matt. xxvi, 20; Luke xxii, 14), and Jesus Himself said quite explicitly: 'With desire I have desired to eat this pasch with you before I suffer' (Luke xxii, 15).

<sup>1</sup> Beer remarks: 'This sleep may have been produced by the wine. If some slept, the others might at least redeem the honour of the evening.' On this abuse cp. Amos vi, 5; Osee iv, 1; Isa. v, 11 ff.; xxii, 12; xxviii, 1, 7 ff. This last detail, introduced by a writer who, none the less, treats the Talmudic texts with great respect and sees nothing but what is beautiful in the celebration of the Passover, shows how, even in this holy feast, abuses had crept in. After that, we can better understand 1 Cor. xi, 21. On the question of the aphiqomen, cp. H. Lietzmann, *Zeitschrift f. N. T. Wiss.*, XXV (1926), pp. 1-5.

It is difficult to elude the force of these passages, and especially of the last. Lagrange, after having explained the reasons that can be brought in favour of the hypothesis denying the paschal character of the meal, concludes (*S. Marc*, p. 360) : ' If in our first edition we expressed the view that this theory has less to be said for it than others, a more careful study of S. Luke has convinced us that it is not tenable at all.'

This is our own view. Not only do we reject the opinion of those who admit a contradiction between the evangelists at this point, and therefore discard either S. John's testimony or that of the Synoptics,<sup>1</sup> but we also part company with those exegetes who think it possible to reconcile the denial of the paschal character of the supper with the Synoptic narrative.<sup>2</sup>

Several theories have been put forward to explain how it was that Jesus was crucified on 14th Nisan, although He ate the Passover on that same day, the eve of the feast :

(a) Jesus anticipated the celebration of the Passover. This view is thus set forth by Godet (*Saint Luc*, II, 342 ff.) :

' Matt. xxvi, 18, has preserved for us, in our Lord's message to the master of the house, a saying that deserves to be well weighed. " My time is near at hand. With thee I make the pasch with My disciples." We shall not really understand what was in our Lord's mind unless we see in

<sup>1</sup> For example, Reuss, *Histoire Evangélique*, p. 627 ; Wright, *Synopsis*, pp. 139, etc.

<sup>2</sup> We acknowledge, however, that this opinion is not new. Dom Calmet, who upheld it, has claimed for it the support of the Fathers of the second and third centuries, who, in controversy with the Quarto-decimans, maintained that Christ did not eat the Paschal Lamb on the 14 Nisan. Bossuet, in his *Explication des prières de la messe*, XXIII, acknowledges that many have held that Christ could not have eaten the legal passover this year, having been Himself immolated at the same time as the Paschal Lamb. Fouard, II, 503, ' without going so far as to adopt this opinion (Calmet's), which is shocking to the general sentiment of the Church,' thinks at least that Jesus did not eat the Paschal Lamb. Le Camus, III, 183, thinks that the Passover had been put back to the 15th to avoid two feasts coming in succession, or that Christ did not eat the legal Passover.

This interpretation has been confirmed by the aid of another hypothesis : the supper would not have been a paschal meal but a qidduch. This view has been expounded by Box in *The Jewish Antecedents of the Eucharist*, J.T.S., III (1902), 357-9. Batiffol accepts it in the first editions of his *Eucharistie*, p. 36, but abandons it in the fourth and following editions (p. 133). This theory has been taken up by W. O. E. Oesterley, *The Jewish Background of the Christian Liturgy* (Oxford, 1925), pp. 156-93. But it is not tenable ; cp. Lagrange, *S. Marc*, p. 358.

these words a hidden reference to the obligation in which He found Himself, owing to His approaching death, of anticipating the celebration of the Passover. "My death is at hand ; to-morrow it will be too late for Me to celebrate the pasch ; so let Me celebrate it in your house, with My disciples to-night." It is an invitation to the owner of the house at once to get ready a room and all that was necessary for the meal, the two disciples making all preparations conjointly with the host. No doubt the paschal lamb would be immolated in the Temple that evening ; but then, since Jesus was excommunicated with all His followers and was perhaps already the subject of a decree of arrest on the part of the Sanhedrin (John xi, 53), it may be doubted whether in any case He would have been able to immolate the lamb for Himself the next day, according to the official form. It is not at all likely that He would. Therefore He exempted Himself from following the accustomed use, as far as the mode of celebration was involved, just as He exempted Himself from the law itself as regards the day. He was driven to this course by the decision of the Sanhedrin to bring about His death before the feast (Matt. xxvi, 5).'

This hypothesis is not improbable ; but it raises difficulties of its own. Such an anticipation of the Passover must have left a strong impression on the disciples, and yet they do not seem to have been aware of it at all.

(b) Fr. Lagrange supposes a divergence in the computation of the days of the month (*S. Marc*, pp. 362 ff.) : He writes : ' In the Jewish system, like that which prevails even to-day in the Mohammedan world, a month does not commence precisely at the New Moon in accordance with astronomical methods, but on the evening when the New Moon was seen for the first time. Now, even in fine weather, some would see this while others would not. No doubt the competent authority would satisfy itself as to the value of stated evidence on the point, but if that authority was suspect to a religious party, such as might have been the case with the Pharisees, the question would remain a disputed one. . . . Now it is possible to suppose that in the year of our Lord's death, there were some who believed that Thursday was 14th Nisan, while the heads of the nation were awaiting it on the Friday. I do not know that this solution has ever been proposed, and I do not attach much importance to it myself. But it would explain how S. Luke came to

regard the day of the supper as the legal day of the pasch.<sup>1</sup>

## *II. The Preparations for the Supper. The Washing of the Disciples' Feet.*

This discussion finished, we can now turn to the principal facts of this great week. Six days before the Passover there had been the repast and the anointing at Bethania (John xii, 1), and this day being a Sabbath it must be regarded as certain that Jesus had reached Bethania the night before. The next day, a Sunday, the triumphal entry into Jerusalem took place, our Lord returning to Bethania in the evening (Mark xi, 11). On the three following days were given the instructions on which we have commented above, the parables, followed by questioning, and the great eschatological discourse. Luke (xxi, 37, 38) adds : ' . . . in the daytime He was teaching in the Temple, but at night, going out, He abode in the Mount that is called Olivet. And all the people came early in the morning to Him in the Temple, to hear Him.' There was a sense of approaching

<sup>1</sup> A similar explanation has been thus worked out by Strack, *Pesachim* (Leipzig, 1921), p. 10 : ' There was not complete unanimity in computing the beginning of Nisan ; many, however, and Jesus among them, perhaps following their own observations, fixed the 1st of Nisan, and possibly the 14th, a day sooner than the supreme Sadducean court and the priests.'

Billierbeck has taken up and confirmed this hypothesis in his excursus, *The Day of Jesus' Death*, II, pp. 812-53, especially 847 ff. Cp. pp. 598 ff. (on Acts ii, 1) : ' The priests of the house of Boëthus (which from 24 B.C. to A.D. 65 had given six of its members to the High Priesthood : cp. Schürer, II, 270 ff.) wished the Day of Pentecost always to fall on a Sunday, thus conflicting with the Pharisees, who only considered the fifty days after the Passover, whatever the day of the week might be. It is possible that when 15 Nisan fell on a Friday, Boëthus' followers, with the support of other Sadducees, kept back the feast by a day so that the first day of Passover should fall on a Saturday, and Pentecost on a Sunday. This is what happened in the year of our Lord's death ; the Sanhedrin fixed the 15th Nisan on the Sabbath ; the Pharisees, followed by the mass of the people, on the Friday. Jesus and His disciples, following the computation of the Sanhedrin, ate the Passover on the Thursday ; the Sanhedrites, on the Friday. John preferred this computation, which stressed the symbolical significance of our Lord's death. None the less, Christ's words, " That which thou dost, do quickly," and the meaning attached to them by the disciples (xiii, 27 ff.), show that they considered themselves to have already reached the day of preparation for the Passover.'

On this whole question—always obscure—of this Passover of Christ, may be read the very learned dissertation of G. Dalman, *Jesus-Jeschua*, pp. 80-166. Dalman prefers the Synoptic narrative, in this connection. . . . See also Lietzmann, *Messe und Herrenmahl* (Bonn, 1926), pp. 211 ff., according to whom the supper was not a paschal meal, and the primitive rite of the Christian supper owed nothing to the Jewish Passover. Cp. E. Schwartz, *Z.n.t.W.*, VII, 12 ff. ; Burkitt, *J.T.S.*, XVII (1916), 291 ff. ; Ed. Meyer, *Ursprung und Anfänge*, I, 173 ff.



crisis in the air ; on the one hand, the people pressed around Him, on the other, so malevolent were the authorities that Jesus could not pass the night in Jerusalem. This precaution on His part made His arrest more difficult. They did not dare seize Him during the day, surrounded, as He was, by the crowd ; yet they hesitated to pursue Him at night to the Mount of Olives, where some ambush, or at least desperate resistance might be feared from the little band always at His side. It was Judas' treachery that delivered the Jews from the difficulty in which they found themselves placed.

' Now the feast of the pasch and of the Azymes was after two days : and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might by some wile lay hold on Him and kill Him. But they said : Not on the festival day, lest there should be a tumult among the people.'<sup>1</sup> (Mark xiv, 1-2.)

Twelve or fifteen years later, when King Agrippa, encouraged by S. James' execution, resolved to put S. Peter to death, he kept him in prison, in order to bring him to trial when the Passover was at an end (Acts xii, 4). On that occasion he was sure of the popular feeling, but he wished to respect the feast all the same. In our Lord's case, such caution was even more necessary ; for there was reason to fear popular sentiment, especially among the Galileans, who were attached to their prophet, and had come in large numbers for the feast. When they had gone back to their province the execution could take place without hindrance of any kind.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Wright has written : ' The Feast of the Passover was older than the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and originally distinct from it, but in Num. xxviii, 16 ff., the two are united. Passover extended over parts of two days (Nisan 14 and 15), Unleavened Bread over seven days (Nisan 15-21), thus the night of the 15th is common to both feasts. In New Testament times the two feasts were so completely amalgamated into one feast of eight days, that the names " Feast of the Passover " (Luke ii, 41) and " Feast of Unleavened Bread " (Luke xxii, 1-7) are used indifferently. S. Mark's phrase " On the first day of Unleavened Bread," though legally incorrect and not to be reconciled with Old Testament language, was practically true, for the Rabbis, in their desire " to put a fence about the Law," forbade the eating of leavened bread at and after the midday meal of Nisan 14th. The " Western " reading in Luke xxii, 7 is therefore a correction by a legalist.' (Cp. Billerbeck, I, p. 988.)

<sup>2</sup> Similar discussions are recorded by Matthew and Luke ; Matt. xxvi, 3 adds the detail that the meeting of the chief priests and elders was in Caiaphas' house.

While they were in this perplexity, our Lord's enemies received a visit from Judas. 'What will you give me,' he asks, 'and I will deliver Him unto you.' 'But they appointed him thirty pieces of silver' (Matt. xxvi, 15 ; cp. Mark xiv, 10, 11 ; Luke xxii, 3-6).

It was the anointing at Bethania that had precipitated Judas' treachery, the unhappy man thinking himself defrauded by what he regarded as the wastefulness of Mary Magdalen. The next few days saw his feet more firmly planted on his accursed path. With all the insight of fear and hatred he saw that between Jesus and the Jewish leaders it was a war to the death. Our Lord's own attitude on the evening of Palm Sunday had shown clearly enough that He had not the faintest wish for the Jewish national kingship that the people were still ready to give Him ; and the teaching of the next few days made the impression clearer still. The parable of the husbandmen had made it clear that Christ foresaw and accepted His death ; hence surely there was no longer anything to look for or any reason to remain any longer attached to a ruined cause. The distant prospects of the parousia were too far and too exalted to attract Judas, and he thought it the wiser course to withdraw from this adventure in which he had imprudently allowed himself to become involved. And he would go further still ; in betraying his Master he would more surely protect himself, and gain financially too.

This atrocious step, prepared and brought to fruition in our Lord's own inner circle, is a crime by the horror of which we are astonished and dismayed. On reflection, however, it surprises us less than the prolonged hypocrisy of the man. His defection is pointed out by John so early as the preceding Passover at Capharnaum ; which means that he had been able to pass at least a year close to Jesus, without allowing himself to be touched by so many discourses and miracles, and without once letting the eleven Apostles, in whose company he continually was, see that his heart was with them no more. Such persistent duplicity could only go with utter callousness, and nothing in this unfortunate man could cause us any further surprise. We see our Blessed Lord, at the Last Supper, multiplying His efforts to touch this heart into which Satan had found his way. He is offered thirty pieces of silver in Temple money, from its weight equal to a little over 80 francs ; in purchasing power representing

from 500 to 600 francs,<sup>1</sup> 'a much more considerable sum,' remarks Reuss, 'than Judas already possessed. And even if it had been less, we must remember that cupidity, once aroused, is content with less than it had hoped for at first.'

'Now on the first day of the unleavened bread, when they sacrificed the pasch, the disciples say to Him: Whither wilt Thou that we go and prepare for Thee to eat the pasch? And He sendeth two of His disciples and saith to them: Go ye into the city; and there shall meet you a man carrying a pitcher of water. Follow him. And whithersoever he shall go in, say to the master of the house, The Master saith, Where is My refectory, where I may eat the pasch with My disciples? And he will show you a large dining-room furnished. And there prepare ye for us. And His disciples went their way and came into the city. And they found as He had told them: and they prepared the pasch.' (Mark xiv, 12-16. Cp. Matt. xxvi, 17-19; Luke xxii, 7-13.)

These very precise details have remained graven in the memory of Peter, who was one of the two disciples, according to Luke; and is found with John, with whom he will be constantly associated, both at the Resurrection and in the Acts. The whole series of preparations here recorded resembles those that preceded our Lord's entry into Jerusalem. Then He sent His disciples to seek the foal, now to retain the room; in both cases acting as Master and friend. The man on whose services He counted was, no doubt, a disciple too; but he was not known to the Apostles themselves and, in order that he might be recognized, a providential meeting had to be arranged by our Lord. In Jerusalem, more than anywhere else, such mystery was a necessity, and the Master's discretion is plain. And so is His fore-knowledge. In these tragic days, so close to the fatal end, He was careful to show everyone, His faithful disciples and the traitor alike, that He knew where He was going and that He went entirely of His own accord.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See *supra*, vol. I, p. 384, note 1.

<sup>2</sup> On the cenacle, Lagrange remarks: 'If the *κατάλυμα* is not, properly speaking, the private chamber reserved for guests, it is, at least, a place where they are received (3 Kings i, 18; ix, 22; Eccclus. xiv, 25). It is still the Eastern custom to lodge guests in the reception-room, or divan, where they may make themselves comfortable for the night. . . . The room in question is the large one on the first floor, sometimes the only one on that floor, often lighted from above by a square skylight, and set apart

Thus passed Thursday, the last day of freedom that Jesus was to enjoy. While the two disciples were preparing for the meal He remained at Bethania, with the rest. Surrounded by Jews preparing for the feast, beset by the growing anxiety of the Apostles who felt the darkness of night falling around them, we can imagine something of what our Lord's thoughts were in those last hours that still separated Him from the institution of the Eucharist, and from His agony and death.

‘And when the hour was come, He sat down, and the twelve Apostles with Him. And He said to them : With desire I have desired to eat this pasch with you, before I suffer. For I say to you that from this time I will not eat it, till it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.’ (Luke xxii, 14-16.)

In these words we sound at once a depth of tenderness and grief. As Jesus had sent word to the master of the house, His time was at hand, and this Passover would be His last : beyond that there would be nothing but the final consummation in the kingdom of God.

The Jews love to picture heavenly joys under the form of a feast. So it was that, at a meal where Jesus was present, one of the guests, after hearing His words, exclaimed : ‘Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God’ (Luke xiv, 15). In the same way Jesus Himself, in His parables, described the happiness of heaven under the imagery of a marriage feast. But between this supreme reality and the ordinary Passover of the Jews, another feast was to find a place, the Supper, which He was to institute without delay.

And in this solemn hour, full of love and grief, the Apostles began yet another contest about precedence.

‘And there was also a strife amongst them, which of them should seem to be the greater. And He said to them : The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them ; and they that have power over them are called beneficent. But you not so : but he that is the greater among you, let him

for the reception of guests, especially those who were expected to stay. It is furnished with carpets and divans, so that the occupant can take his meals in comfort and settle himself for sleep. . . . It would seem that the disciples had to prepare the repast, the owner putting the room at their service and leaving them free to make their own arrangements and get in provisions as they would.’

become as the younger : and he that is the leader, as he that serveth.' (Luke xxii, 24-27.)

This dispute, placed by Luke towards the end of the meal, would be more easily understood as taking place at the arrival of the guests in the cenacle itself.<sup>1</sup> The places at the table were assigned according to the most strict rules of precedence, jealously observed. Under other circumstances (Luke xiv, 7), our Lord had noticed and blamed the anxiety of guests to appropriate the best places at a feast, but His warning, like so many others to the same purpose, had been quickly forgotten by the Apostles, and now, the very solemnity of the paschal meal and the imminence of the kingdom, as well as the desire to be near the Master Himself, made their ambition more eager and jealous still : so that while Jesus was full of the emotion of this last meal they allowed themselves to be absorbed by their spirit of rivalry and jealous strife. So our Lord resolved to give them a great example that they would never forget ; the evangelist who records it precedes his account with a solemn prologue in which its immense significance is stressed.<sup>2</sup>

‘ Before the festival day of the pasch, Jesus knowing that His hour was come, that He should pass out of this world to the Father : having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them unto the end. And when supper was done (the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, to betray Him), knowing that the Father had given Him all things into His hands and that He came from God and goeth to God, He riseth from supper and layeth aside His garments and,

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Levesque, *Nos quatre Evangiles*, p. 171 ; Lagrange, *L'Evangile de Jésus Christ*, p. 502, etc.

<sup>2</sup> These prologues, intended to give the meaning of the great Gospel incidents, are characteristic of S. John (cp. Godet *in hoc loco*). Each of the principal episodes in his narrative is preceded by a short introduction, just as a prologue stands at the head of his whole work. It is so before the story of Nicodemus (ii, 23-5) : ‘ Now when He was at Jerusalem, at the pasch, upon the festival day, many believed in His name, seeing the signs which He did. But Jesus did not trust Himself unto them : for that He knew all men. And because He needed not that any should give testimony of man : for He knew what was in man.’ In iii, 22-24, before the incident of the jealousy of John the Baptist’s disciples : Jesus baptized in Judea, and John at Ennon. In iv, 1-3 : knowing the jealousy of the Pharisees, Jesus withdrew into Galilee. In iv, 43-45 : the Galileans received Him, knowing what He had done at Jerusalem (it was just after the healing of the centurion’s son). Thus, it is sometimes the historical

having taken a towel, girded Himself. After that, He putteth water into a basin and began to wash the feet of the disciples and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded.' (John xiii, 1-5.)

To wash the feet of guests was an office of hospitality in the East, and, on a former occasion, our Lord had complained that He had not received it from the hands of the Pharisee who had invited Him to a meal at his house (Luke vii, 44). But it was an office that was performed by servants, while Jesus was determined to carry it out Himself. Every detail of this humble ministry is noted with tender admiration by S. John. Taking off His upper garments He only kept on the tunic, which was worn by servants ; like a servant He girded Himself with an apron : He had to carry the basin in both hands, and then, putting it down, to wash the disciples' feet, filling and refilling it Himself. And the Apostles watched Him ; now, as always, looking on with respect. It was the same when, in the first days of the common ministry, they had seen Him conversing with the Samaritan woman, and none of them had dared ask Him : ' Why talkest Thou with her ? ' This respect with which He had inspired them from the first, had grown during those two years, and on this last day, by giving them this great example of humility, He was going to renew it powerfully in their minds. But S. Peter could not contain himself. It was to him that our Lord came first, and when he saw Him coming thus servant-wise with apron and basin, he cried aloud : ' Lord, dost Thou wash my feet ! ' ' What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter,' was the reply. It was only a few hours now to the Passion, and this excess of humility and sufferance was beginning to open the disciples' eyes. Above all, Pentecost would follow, when Peter would understand the great lesson that was so full of mystery to him now. But just now he could not even understand what our Lord meant, or accept what seemed to him intolerable at the moment, and once more he protested with redoubled energy : ' Thou shalt never wash my feet.' Jesus would argue no further with His Apostle still so blind,

setting that is recapitulated, sometimes the dispositions of those who are about to come into contact with our Lord, sometimes the sentiments of Jesus Himself. It is these that are described here, and with an emotion in which all the adoration and love of the Beloved Disciple passes before our minds.

but with deep emotion tells him : ' If I wash thee not thou shalt have no part with Me.'

Such words were irresistible to anyone who loved our Lord ; they might not understand His demands, but they would yield to them at once ; anything rather than a rupture of that kind. ' To whom shall we go ? Thou hast the words of eternal life.' Now, even more than at Capharnaum, Peter was laid hold of by Christ, and could not withdraw from that embrace. He obeyed, and now his impulsive temperament carried him to the other extreme : ' Not only my feet, but also my hands and my head ! ' The others followed Peter's example, and like him, submitted one after another to our Lord's wish : and Judas, too ! But him our Lord warned with the words : ' You are clean, but not all '—a warning that knocked at Judas' heart without finding a way in ; Satan was there, and his mastery was supreme.

Our Lord lost no time in drawing the appropriate lesson from the great example He had just set, and, to bring it home with greater force, He did not shrink from insisting on who He was : ' You call Me Master and Lord, and you say well, for so I am.' So does Christian humility not misunderstand true dignities ; rather it consecrates them. Jesus bent at the feet of His Apostles, but remaining what He was all the time, and continuing to be treated as such ; Master and Lord. And His example is more eloquent than speech, teaching us that service is no degradation and that true greatness need have no fear of lowering itself by humility and service. His Church would receive from Him this rite of the Washing of Feet, but above all she would have learnt and preserved the great lesson of the virtue for which that rite stands. The leaven of jealousy and the spirit of domination will always remain active in the depths of every human heart ; but in all true Christians it will be stifled by the spirit of the Gospel ; they will remember that in the Church of God, the most exalted dignities are only services and that the Sovereign Pontiff loves to call himself Servant of the Servants of God.

And this washing of feet enshrined another lesson too ; by which Jesus would teach all Christians something of the purity they are expected to bring to the celebration of the mysteries of His Body and Blood. He was just about to institute the Holy Eucharist, and He wished to prepare His

Apostles to receive it. They are pure, no doubt, except the traitor ; but in passing along the dusty road of life, they have contracted some slight stains. These Christ wished to remove, and none other could do so but He : if they refused they could have no part with Him ; but purified by Him, they could take their places at the table, where they were about to share in that great mystery so long foretold, and which it was time to accomplish at last.

### III. *The Supper.*

It is very difficult to follow in all its details the Supper celebrated by our Lord ;<sup>1</sup> but in the Gospel narratives there are at least certain facts that stand out clearly ; namely, the announcement of Judas' treachery and the institution of the Holy Eucharist. Jesus had a number of motives for speaking of His betrayal in advance. Several times, since Cæsarea Philippi, He had chosen to predict the ill-treatment that He would receive at His enemies' hands, and in that way, little by little, He strengthened the spirit of His Apostles against these terrible facts. Even if He did not succeed in dissipating their presumption and softening the unlooked-for shock that they were to receive, He gave them the strength to recover immediately, when they remembered that all had been foreseen and accepted by their Master Himself. And it was the same with the treason of Judas. Apparently Jesus was going to fall a victim to an ambushade ; so it was necessary that He should show that He was not unaware of the fact ; and that He was going to His fate of His own free will and that the wretched man whom He had so long honoured with His friendship had not deceived Him in the least degree. Thus would the faith of His true disciples be confirmed ; thus, too, would be confirmed the completely voluntary character of His sacrifice, which He was at such pains to put beyond all reasonable doubt : ' No man taketh it [My life] away from Me : but I lay it down of Myself. And I have power to lay it down ; and I have power to take it up again ' (John x, 18).

But for these warnings there was another and more pressing motive still. Our Blessed Lord had no part in the traitor's fall. To Him all His Apostles were dear, even this

<sup>1</sup> However, if anyone wishes for an outline, with some claims to probability, though not certainty, he may follow that proposed by Berning, *Die Einsetzung der heiligen Eucharistie*, pp. 155, 156 (end of the book).



hapless son of perdition upon whom Satan had laid his hand. During that last hour of intimate converse, Christ had multiplied His attempts to bring him once more to His feet ; but all efforts were to prove vain. Even as early in the evening as at the washing of the feet, Jesus had revealed the impending betrayal : ' You are clean, but not all ' ; and when on the point of instituting the Holy Eucharist, He spoke more clearly still :

' And when they were at table and eating, Jesus saith : Amen, I say to you, one of you that eateth with Me shall betray Me. But they began to be sorrowful and to say to Him, one by one : Is it I ? Who saith to them : One of the twelve, who dippeth with Me his hand in the dish. And the Son of Man indeed goeth, as it is written of Him : but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man shall be betrayed. It were better for him, if that man had not been born.' (Mark xiv, 18-21.)

This painful scene, described with such restraint, shows plainly the vivid impression that it left on the Apostles' mind ; so great was their confidence in their Master's intuitions that they even began to doubt themselves ; and from every side we get the anguished question : ' Is it I ? ' Judas had no wish to betray himself by his silence and, impudently, he asked the same question as the rest. ' Is it I, Rabbi ? ' ' Thou hast said it ' (Matt. xxvi, 25) was our Lord's reply, understood only by the traitor himself. He knew now that he was discovered, but he remained obstinate in his design. The others in their eager cross-questioning had not heard Jesus' reply, while His words were too general in character to remove their uncertainty ; they, too, all twelve, were eating with Him ; they, too, were dipping their hand in the same dish ; and while mentioning this detail our Lord did not wish to give any more precise indication of the truth, but only sadly to point out the most odious feature of the betrayal, on the part of one who was there and who was sharing in this very meal. It had been the Psalmist's complaint, centuries before (Ps. xl, 10 ; cp. John xiii, 18) : ' (he) who ate my bread, hath greatly supplanted me.'

We get a glimpse of the profound emotion by which the little group was stirred, in the fact that instead of questioning the Master any further, ' they began to inquire among themselves which of them it was that should do this thing.'

Shortly before, there had been the wretched quarrel about precedence ; and in that atmosphere suspicions of the worst kind would easily arise : the great question was how to inaugurate the mystery of love, amidst all this agitation and distress.

So, urged on in any case by Peter's anxious insistence, our Lord hurried the incident to a close :

' When Jesus had said these things, He was troubled in spirit ; and He testified, and said : Amen, amen, I say to you, one of you shall betray Me. The disciples therefore looked one upon another, doubting of whom He spoke. Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore beckoned to Him and said to Him : Who is it of whom He speaketh ? He, therefore, leaning on the breast of Jesus, saith to Him : Lord, who is it ? Jesus answered : He it is to whom I shall reach bread dipped. And when He had dipped the bread, He gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. And after the morsel, Satan entered into him. And Jesus said to him : That which thou dost, do quickly. Now no man at the table knew to what purpose He said this unto him. For some thought, because Judas had the purse, that Jesus had said to him : Buy those things which we have need of for the festival day : or that he should give something to the poor. He, therefore, having received the morsel, went out immediately. And it was night.' (John xiii, 21-30.)

This is one of the most dramatic incidents in the Gospel, as well as one of those most deeply graven in the memory of S. John. He loved to describe himself as he who leaned on the Lord's breast at supper and said : ' Lord, who is he that shall betray Thee ? ' (xxi, 20). As in S. Luke, we see the Apostles questioning each other, at least by look : ' Who is it ? ' And Jesus repeated His solemn statement : ' Amen, amen, I say to you, one of you shall betray Me.' Then Peter could contain himself no longer. We know the special ties that bound him to John, his usual companion in missions and journeys of every kind. To John, then, he signalled to question Jesus, and with the simple familiarity bred of his purity and his love for Christ, John asked Him : ' Lord, who is it ? ' Our Lord answered him, at the same time giving him to understand that it was a secret that he must keep. Other-

wise, no doubt, Peter's impulsive zeal would have betrayed him into striking Judas, as he would Malchus very soon. John suffers and says nothing ; and in this silent confidant of Christ we have already a fore-glimpse of him who in the apostolic college will be depositary of the great secrets and treasures of Almighty God. To Peter the supreme authority, with the responsibility of great decisions ; to Paul the apostolate, with its incessant labour and the ' solicitude of all the churches ' that it involves ; but to John, the guardianship of our Lord's Mother, the secrets of the last days, the mysteries of the intimate life of God.

The sign given by Jesus was itself a mark of friendship, a last effort to win over Judas ; but the traitor hardens himself against it, and this very last effort ends in his final delivery into Satan's power.<sup>1</sup>

All this took place so rapidly that no one, except him who was our Lord's confidant in the matter, realized the meaning of His words nor the purpose of Judas' abrupt departure ; they were accustomed to see him busy about temporal affairs, purchases and alms ; and they looked no further. This fact, among many others, shows the deep duplicity of the traitor who, up to the last moment, succeeded in misleading the eleven whose constant companion he had been. We shall also be justified in finding here an example of the reciprocal confidence that Jesus had established among His followers. Much rivalry among them there was, but at least grave suspicion was unknown. So moved were they by our Lord's most urgent warnings as even to doubt themselves, and to ask the anxious question : ' Master, is it I ? ' They questioned one another, too, looking stupefied at each other ; but in spite of all this anguish and all these doubts, their suspicions dared not

<sup>1</sup> Godet, *Jean*, 359 : ' Up to this point, in the interests of his overmastering passion, Judas had stifled within him the conviction of the divinity of our Lord. But now he is pierced by the radiance of the Divine knowledge, of which previous warnings had merely given him a glimpse. By this sign and its accompanying words Jesus was telling him plainly : " You it is who are eating My bread, while yet you are about to betray Me ! " But at the same time He let him know that he was still numbered among His disciples, so that it was still possible for him to retrace his steps. But he would do nothing of the kind ; and the violent effort that he had to make to close his heart to heavenly influences, opened its doors to diabolical ones instead. In fact, it was in these that he had to seek the strength to accomplish this last act of resistance to grace. As it was said of David that he strengthened himself in the Lord, so Judas strengthened himself in Satan.'

light upon anyone, and Judas left without his departure giving the alarm.

‘And it was night.’ This last detail succeeds in conveying the impression made by the whole scene ; and when John wrote the words he still felt the anguish of the darkness that gripped all hearts as it fell. ‘Men loved darkness rather than light,’ he had already written of the enemies of Christ. And now their hour was at hand ; a few more moments of freedom, and soon in the garden Jesus will say : ‘This is your hour and the power of darkness.’ (Luke xxii, 53.)

It was probably after the departure of Judas that the institution of the Holy Eucharist took place. We know that this point has been minutely discussed, and in fact the Gospel texts can be taken in both ways. On the one hand, Luke (xxii, 21–23) does not record our Lord’s warnings about the betrayal until after the account of the institution of the Eucharist (xxii, 19–20) ; but in Matthew and Mark we find the order reversed : first the prediction of the betrayal (Matt. xxvi, 21–25 ; Mark xiv, 18–21), then the institution of the Eucharist (Matt. xxvi, 27–29 ; Mark xiv, 22–25) ; while the discussion cannot be closed by a reference to John, since he does not relate the institution of the Eucharist at all. A great number of the Fathers thought that Judas had communicated, and they draw spiritual instructions from the fact. However, several have taken the opposite view, and this is the general opinion to-day. This seems to us to be right. In such matters reasons of edification can be brought, for and against ; we will say nothing about all that, but the evidence of the texts seems to favour the negative view.<sup>1</sup>

Judas was gone, and Jesus found Himself alone with His

<sup>1</sup> Only Luke seems to write in the contrary sense ; but since we have already transferred to the beginning of the meal the dispute placed by him at the end, relying on the two other Synoptics, we may in the same way invert the order here. Cp. Levesque, 173, n. 1 : ‘From a comparison of John with the Synoptics it follows that Judas had not communicated. A good number of Fathers have maintained the contrary, relying on the authority of S. Luke. But several Fathers and modern theologians and commentators in general are for the negative view. We have seen above that Luke has made no attempt here to follow the chronological order.’ It has been further remarked (Berning, 251) that nothing could be taken after the paschal lamb ; so that if Jesus had celebrated the Passover, the morsel that He gave to Judas, who went out immediately after receiving it, belongs to the paschal supper in the proper sense. It was certainly not the Eucharist, and it could not be any other service, since the Eucharist followed the paschal meal.

faithful disciples. The moment so greatly longed for had come ; that moment to which Christ alluded when, at the beginning of the meal, He told them : ‘ With desire I have desired to eat this pasch with you before I suffer.’ The institution of the Eucharist is not related by S. John, and this is certainly one of the most notable omissions of his Gospel, so much so that some Protestants of the last century were disposed to conclude that the institution never occurred in actual fact. In their view, the Eucharist was unknown to S. John. No one would attempt to sustain this thesis to-day ; for it is too certain that when John wrote his Gospel, the Eucharist was celebrated in the Church as a rite going back to the time of our Lord Himself. For the rest, the long discourse in chapter vi of S. John’s Gospel clearly has the Eucharist as its subject, a fact accepted without difficulty at the present time. If anyone still asks why the evangelist has omitted the narrative of the institution, the best answer is derived from the purpose of his book. Above all, he is following out a doctrinal scheme, with instruction as his end, which is why he has recorded at such great length our Lord’s eucharistic discourse, full of lessons as it is. As to the fact of the institution itself, no doubt he considered that the Synoptics’ narrative was sufficient, and found nothing to add. For the rest, there is more than one feature in his own account upon which light is thrown by the fact that the Eucharist was an ever-present memory in his mind. Thus, at the commencement of the supper : ‘ Before the festival day of the pasch, Jesus knowing that His hour was come that He should pass out of this world to the Father : having loved His own that were in the world, He loved them unto the end.’ So again, in the long discourse that followed the Supper, we have these exhortations so tender and so insistent, and repeated so many times : ‘ Abide in Me, and I in you,’ and towards the end, the last prayer to His Father : ‘ That they all may be one, as Thou, Father in Me, and I in Thee : that they all may be one in Us.’ We recognize here the eucharistic doctrine as developed in chapter vi : ‘ He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood abideth in Me and I in him. As the living Father hath sent Me and I live by the Father ; so he that eateth Me, the same also shall live by Me.’ The memory of this discourse at Capharnaum helps us, too, to understand what we read here. No doubt the Apostles had entire faith in their Master ; still, it would

have been difficult for them to have risen at a single flight to a belief in the Eucharist, if they had not been already prepared. There was nothing in Judaism to lead them up to this mystery, naturally so far beyond their reach ; and we should have been surprised if Christ had suddenly, and without preparation, brought them face to face with a mystery so new and so sublime. And this all the more, because in all other matters our Lord took care to prepare the souls with which He dealt for the calls and revelations He intended to give them. How many times in succession, at the Jordan, on the shores of the Lake, did He call His Apostles before He definitely attached them to Himself ! In how many prophecies, during a whole year, did He give them a hint of their Master's Passion, and of their own coming trials ! It would be strange if the ground had not been similarly prepared for the revelation of the Eucharist, so divine, and therefore so baffling for men. And indeed S. John's narrative shows us how this distant preparation, veiled and discreet as it was, appeared to most of the disciples as a crushing weight that they refused to carry. It is then that we get the first hint in the Gospels of Judas' defection, no less than of Peter's closer attachment to his Divine Master, while he confirmed the faith of the other Apostles as well. ' To whom shall we go ? Thou hast the words of eternal life.' The faith so courageously professed by the lakeside, was, in the cenacle, to receive its full reward.

We have accounts of this great mystery, left not only by the three Synoptics, but also by S. Paul in his epistle to the Corinthians. Let us read once again those passages, which it is illuminating merely to put side by side :

' For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread, and giving thanks, broke and said : Take ye and eat : This is My body, which shall be delivered for you. This do for the commemoration of Me. In like manner also the chalice, after He had supped, saying : This chalice is the New Testament in My blood. This do ye, as often as you shall drink, for the commemoration of Me. For as often as you shall eat this bread and drink the chalice, you shall show the death of the Lord, until He come. Therefore, who-

soever shall eat this bread, or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and of the blood of the Lord. But let a man prove himself : and so let him eat of that bread and drink of the chalice. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily eateth and drinketh judgement to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord.' (1 Cor. xi, 23-29.)

In this passage, written about the year 55, only twenty-five years after the Last Supper, we recognize the traditional narrative of the institution, and our Lord's words, as they were graven in the memories of Christians and as we find them in the synoptical writers as well :

' And whilst they were at supper, Jesus took bread and blessed and broke and gave to His disciples and said : Take ye and eat. This is My body. And taking the chalice, He gave thanks and gave to them, saying : Drink ye all of this. For this is My blood of the New Testament, which shall be shed for many unto remission of sins. And I say to you, I will not drink from henceforth of this fruit of the vine until that day when I shall drink it with you new in the kingdom of My Father.' (Matt. xxvi, 26-29.)

' And whilst they were eating, Jesus took bread ; and blessing, broke and gave to them and said : Take ye. This is My body. And having taken the chalice, giving thanks, He gave it to them. And they all drank of it. And He said to them : This is My blood of the New Testament, which shall be shed for many. Amen, I say to you that I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine until that day when I shall drink it new in the kingdom of God.' (Mark xiv, 22-25.)

' And when the hour was come, He sat down : and the twelve Apostles with Him. And He said to them : With desire I have desired to eat this pasch with you, before I suffer. For I say to you that from this time I will not eat it, till it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And having taken the chalice, He gave thanks and said : Take and divide it among you. For I say to you that I will not drink of the fruit of the vine till the kingdom of God come. And taking bread, He gave thanks and brake and gave to

them, saying : This is My body, which is given for you. Do this for a commemoration of Me. In like manner, the chalice also, after He had supped, saying : This is the chalice, the New Testament in My blood, which shall be shed for you.<sup>1</sup> (Luke xxii, 14-20.)

The first cup mentioned by S. Luke (xxii, 17, 18) is one of the cups that were passed round during the paschal meal ; it was probably in taking it and causing it to be passed round among the Apostles that Jesus said : ' I will not drink of the fruit of the vine till the kingdom of God come.' Matthew and Mark, who do not mention this cup, record the words a little later on, when Jesus had already offered to the Apostles the cup that He is going to consecrate with His blood. The order followed by Luke is more natural, and it is no doubt with a view to recording these memorable words that Luke mentions the incident of this cup. The meaning of this solemn prediction is quite clear. In the kingdom of God the Jews were looking for an entirely new order of things, a new heaven and a new earth,<sup>2</sup> and it was to these hopes that our Lord alluded when He spoke of the new wine that He would drink with His Apostles in His Father's kingdom ; but they knew that He would reach

<sup>1</sup> In this text of Luke, the verses 19b-20 (from ' given for you ' to the end) are missing in several ancient manuscripts, namely the *Codex Bezae* and three manuscripts of the pre-Jerome Latin version, i.e. Vercellensis, Corbeiensis, Vindobonensis. The omission of these two verses is peculiar to the Western text, and is easily enough explained by the desire to suppress the apparent difficulty created by the double mention of the cup (17-18 and 20). On the other hand, these two verses are found in all the great Greek manuscripts, except D, which is bilingual ; and they are required by the parallelism of the narrative (v. 20 corresponding to v. 19, like 17-18 to 15-16). Finally, we should be at a loss to explain their insertion in this passage ; if they were borrowed from Paul, from whence comes the addition of ' shed for you,' or the omission of the second command to ' Do this' ? They are retained by Tischendorf and Nestle, but suppressed by Westcott and Hort. On this question of textual criticism may be consulted M. de La Taille, *Mysterium Fidei*, pp. 33-5 ; also the commentaries of Lagrange, pp. 545-7, and of Valensin-Huby, pp. 382-4. In the contrary sense, F. C. Burkitt, *J.T.S.*, xxviii (1927), pp. 178-81, supports the authenticity of the shorter form. In the same review, xxviii (1927), pp. 362-8, H. N. Bate supposes the existence of an original text from which all mention of the Eucharist would be absent (v. 19 being wholly suppressed), this silence being attributed to the discipline of the *arcana*. This conjecture has been adopted by Gore, in *A New Commentary*, p. 235 ; but it seems to me very weak, and to attribute an influence to the discipline of the *arcana* which is improbable at this date. It should be remarked that this conjecture had already been put forward by Blass and Lietzmann, but that Lietzmann subsequently abandoned and refuted it : *Messe und Abendmahl*, p. 216, n. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Isa. lxv, 17 ; xliii, 19 ; lxvi, 22. Cp. Lagrange, *S. Marc*, p. 381.



that kingdom only through His death ; so they realized that this was the last meal they would take with Him here below, and that His death was at hand ; but that it would be followed by the coming of that kingdom that was the goal of all their desires.

It was after He had uttered these predictions, the meal being now finished and Judas gone, that Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it and gave it to His disciples with the words : ' Take ye and eat : This is My body.' Then, similarly, He took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying at the same time : ' Drink ye all of this. For this is My blood of the New Testament, which shall be shed for many unto remission of sins.'

The faithful literalness with which these words have been handed down to us by the synoptics and S. Paul show how they are graven in the memory of the Church. Of this our Lord's last meal, so full, we should have thought, of unforgettable lessons, the other incidents are only known to us through fragments, and through a single witness in almost every case. The discourse after the Supper has been preserved to us only by S. John, although its importance for the understanding of Christianity, and above all of the person and mission of Christ Himself, is comparable only to that of the Sermon on the Mount. It is the same with the moving and significant scene of the Washing of Feet. It is true that the last warnings to Judas resound in all the Gospels, but under divergent forms and at different times. It is difficult to determine the nature of the meal itself, since it is not possible to be certain if it was the Paschal Supper, and if Christ then ate the paschal lamb or not. But all these obscurities make the central picture stand out, by contrast so firm in its drawing, and set in so strong a light. We are conscious that the Eucharist then instituted was, from the first years of Christianity, the centre of the Church's life and worship, and our Lord's words, scrupulously preserved, have remained, not only as the liturgical form of this great action, but still more as the foundation of the Christian Faith. S. Paul's instructions to his faithful bear witness with what a docile and simple faith the Church of that age received and believed these solemn statements of her Lord : ' . . . Whosoever shall eat this bread, or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord . . . he that eateth and drinketh unworthily

eateth and drinketh judgement to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord.<sup>1</sup>

And so, as far back as we can go in the history of Christianity, the Church's faith appears to us in all that luminous strength which it was always to preserve. She had received the Lord's word and believed it, simply, faithfully, and without reservation of any kind. So, later, would write the great Gallic doctor, Hilary : ' We must not speak of the things of God in a human way . . . we must read what is written and understand what we read, and then we shall have accomplished the whole duty of the Faith. . . . Christ has told us Himself : " My flesh is meat indeed and My blood is drink indeed. He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood abideth in Me and I in him." Concerning the reality of this flesh and blood there is no room for doubt. For our Lord Himself proclaims and our faith accepts, that it is truly His flesh and blood, and those who eat and drink it are truly in Christ, and Christ in them. And this, surely, is truth to all except those who deny that Christ is truly God.'<sup>1</sup>

These last words are decisive ; we are face to face with a great mystery, but there is nothing to discourage a true Christian in that. In the discourse on the Bread of Life, our Lord said :

' I am the Bread of Life. Your fathers did eat manna in the desert : and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven : that if any man eat of it, he may not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever, and the bread that I will give is My flesh, for the life of the world.' (John vi, 48-52.)

Thus He links together these two mysteries, the Incarnation and the Eucharist : and in fact they throw light on each other. For if in the Incarnation the Son of God has taken human flesh, this was to save us and unite Himself to us ; and it is in the Eucharist that the consummation of this salvation and union is reached. And so it is that these two mysteries are so closely bound together, that they guarantee and confirm each other.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> S. Hilary, *De Trinitate*, viii, 14 (P.L., X, 247).

<sup>2</sup> Bossuet, echoing the tradition of the Fathers, has expressed the union of the two mysteries with considerable force : *Méditations sur l'Evangile*,

No doubt these considerations were not developed all at once, but they were all present in germ in the discourse to which the Apostles had listened a year earlier at Capharnaum. And if it be asked whether, in the interval, our Lord had reminded them of His words, the answer is most probably yes, for thus to go over His teaching again and again is in accordance with the method that He pursued. He was never content to state just once the truths He wished to be believed, especially when they were likely to puzzle His hearers, or to come into collision with their traditional prejudices. On the contrary, He recalled them often, and in many forms. Thus, on several occasions He repeated the prediction of His Passion, namely at Cæsarea Philippi, after the Transfiguration, and when going up to Jerusalem. Probably, it was the same with the Eucharist, which, when first foreshadowed at Capharnaum, caused so much scandal and so general a falling away. The Apostles, amazed as they too may have been, withstood the shock : later, they were once more to be brought face to face with this exalted truth, which would one day be the centre of their whole life.

For the rest, there was much to prepare them for this great mystery in what they had already seen and heard, for example, the multiplication of the loaves. On two occasions they had seen Jesus take bread and break it, after giving thanks, as He did on the evening of the Supper, and the bread was multiplied in His hands. Better still, there was that whole collection of miracles of which they had been the privileged witnesses for more than two years : the miraculous draught of fishes, the walking on the sea, cures, raisings from the dead—deed after deed of wonder had day by day strengthened and purified their faith. And this faith was their great source of strength : it was the thing above all

*32<sup>me</sup> journée.* We see how Christ, so to speak, submerges Himself continually in matter and that ever more and more. He introduces His discourse on the Bread from Heaven in connection with the material bread that He had just given to the people ; and He goes so far as to say that He will give them His Flesh and Blood to eat. And this He teaches with as much insistence as He did the fact of His Incarnation ; in this way clearly instructing us that we ought as really to eat His Flesh and drink His Blood, as He has taken both into union with Himself, and that this is our salvation and our life. For in this way He does not simply take human flesh in general, but He takes the flesh of each of us, when each of us receives His own. Therefore, He is made man for us and applies to us His Incarnation ; as S. Hilary said, He only wears or takes the flesh of him who takes His own ; He is by no means our Saviour, and it is not for us that He was made incarnate, if we do not ourselves take the flesh that He has taken. Thus the work of our salvation finds its completion in the Eucharist, when we eat the Flesh of the Redeemer Himself.

else that our Lord had yet Himself to develop in them, and it was here that His training had the most effect. They were slow to believe, and they had but little spiritual insight as yet ; but they put a blind and simple trust in their Master's words : ' Bid me come to Thee upon the waters,' said Peter, on one occasion, as on another, the sons of Zebedee asked : ' Lord, wilt Thou that we command fire to come down from heaven and consume them ? ' They themselves, in their short missionary expedition, had put to the test the miraculous powers with which they had been entrusted, and they had returned full of enthusiasm at what they had been able to do. And all these impressions gained fresh strength from their Master's teaching, so often and with such energy repeated : ' All things are possible to him that believeth ' (Mark ix, 22). ' Amen, I say to you, if you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you shall say to this mountain, remove from hence hither, and it shall remove ; and nothing shall be impossible to you ' (Matt. xvii, 20). At the time we have now reached, this faith was stronger than it had ever been ; a fact of which we shall soon find proof as we go through the discourse after the Supper. So when confronted with these mysterious sayings, they did what they had always done in Christ's school : they just believed.

Although we are not writing controversially here, we may note, just in passing, that what we know of the Apostles renders more improbable than ever all those allegorical interpretations that have been invented with a view to effacing the real and direct meaning of our Lord's words. He knew the simple and docile minds with which He had to deal ; it was to them that He had confided the secrets of His kingdom, as to depositaries who were to pass them on to the whole world. Consequently He spared no pains to banish all equivocation and to make clear those first elements of Christianity which would be illuminated and strengthened later by the coming of the Holy Ghost. When, one day, He said : ' Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees,' the Apostles took Him literally, thinking that He meant to reproach them for not having made any provision of food, whereupon the Lord explained that He had not intended to speak of the leaven of the Pharisees, but of their teaching. Another time, when His hearers were troubled and scandalized at His statement that : ' Not that which goeth into a man

defileth a man, but what cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man,' our Lord took the trouble to explain Himself more clearly when He and His Apostles were alone. Similarly, when He had spoken to the people in parables He gave their interpretation to the twelve. It is surely impossible to suppose that this constant solicitude would have failed at this, the most important point of all. For those Protestants who reject the obvious and traditional interpretation of the Supper, it must remain an indecipherable puzzle with whose attempted solutions it is no longer possible to keep pace. In 1577, only sixty years after the beginning of the Reformation, a theologian enumerated two hundred different interpretations, suggested by Protestants, of the words : ' This is My body.' Surely it is impossible to pretend that this is what Christ wished, and that in His last farewell meal He had no other intention than to put before His Apostles an insoluble enigma, which from the morrow of His death onward was to be interpreted by the whole Church in the wrong way ?

The surest way exactly to grasp the words spoken by Christ to the Apostles is to let ourselves be penetrated, as far as possible, with their spirit ; to try to understand Him as they would have done. To this end we must cut away all the undergrowth of forced interpretation and arbitrary glosses ; and, returning to our Lord's own words, hear them with a faith simple and direct. ' What clearness,' writes Bossuet,<sup>1</sup> ' what precision ! what strength ! But at the same time what authority and power are in Thy words : Woman, thou art cured ; and she is cured on the spot. This is My Body ; and it is His Body. This is My Blood ; and it is His Blood. Who can speak after this fashion, but He who hath all things in His hand ? Who could make Himself believed, but He to whom to do and to speak is one and the same thing ? . . . In thy faith, He desires the same simplicity that He has shown in His words. This is My Body ; and it is His Body. This is My Blood ; and it is His Blood. In the ancient way of communicating, the priest said : The Body of Jesus Christ ; and the faithful answered : Amen ; it is so. The priest said : The Blood of Jesus Christ ; and the faithful answered : Amen ; it is so. All was done, said, explained by these few words. I am silent, I believe, I adore ; all is done ; all is said.'

So far, in the Lord's Supper, we have considered only the

<sup>1</sup> *Méditations sur l'Evangile, 22<sup>me</sup> journée.*

sacrament by which He really gives us His Flesh and Blood ; yet this is far from being the only aspect of the Eucharist ; there are others, the importance of which is no less. Christ gave Himself to His Apostles, but He gave Himself as a victim by whose offering the New Testament was ratified, who was given for man, and paid a ransom for their sins. Not only did Christ say : ' This is My body, this is My blood ; ' but : ' This is My body which shall be delivered for you ' (1 Cor. xi, 24) ; ' This is My body, which is given for you ' (Luke xxii, 19) ; ' This is my blood of the new testament, which shall be shed for many unto remission of sins ' (Matt. xxvi, 28).<sup>1</sup>

The first fact that emerges from a careful reading of these passages is that our Lord's body is here as ' given,' His blood as ' shed.' ' He means, therefore, that this body is not only given to us in the Eucharist : Take, eat ; this is My body ; but further that it is given for us, quite as much as upon the Cross : which shows that He is here our victim, that He is offered here, too, although in another way.'<sup>2</sup> This relation of the Eucharist to the Cross is fundamental : if the Eucharist is a true sacrifice, it is because it really represents the sacrifice of Calvary ; being, in no sense, a symbol, image, or simple memorial, but the same sacrifice offered to God the Father, in an unbloody form. And it was this sacrifice that Jesus meant when He told His apostles that this body that He offered them was a body ' given,' broken for them ; this blood a blood ' shed,' none other than the blood of the New Testament itself.<sup>3</sup>

In order to grasp the full significance of this new covenant, it is necessary to have before us the account of the old covenant, the very centre of the faith of Israel, which the word alone would recall to the Apostles' mind.

' So Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord, and all the judgements. And all the people answered with one voice : We will do all the words of

<sup>1</sup> Cp. ' This is My blood of the New Testament, which shall be shed for many ' (Mark xiv, 24) ; ' This is the chalice, the New Testament in My blood, which shall be shed for you ' (Luke xxii, 20) ; ' This chalice is the New Testament in my blood ' (1 Cor. xi, 24).

<sup>2</sup> Bossuet, *60<sup>me</sup> journée*.

<sup>3</sup> This unity of the sacrifice of Christ, both at the Supper and on the Cross, has been powerfully brought out by Fr. de la Taille, *Mysterium Fidei* (Paris, 1924).

the Lord, which he hath spoken. And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord : and rising in the morning he built an altar at the foot of the mount, and twelve titles according to the twelve tribes of Israel. And he sent young men of the children of Israel : and they offered holocausts, and sacrificed pacific victims of calves to the Lord. Then Moses took half of the blood, and put it into bowls : and the rest he poured upon the altar. And taking the book of the covenant, he read it in the hearing of the people : and they said : All things that the Lord hath spoken we will do. We will be obedient. And he took the blood and sprinkled it upon the people, and he said : This is the blood of the covenant which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words.' (Exodus xxiv, 3-8.)

It is only necessary to compare these last words with those of Christ at the Last Supper, to recognize the link by which the two covenants were united in our Lord's mind ; a connection that is stressed in the Epistle to the Hebrews :

' And therefore He is the mediator of the New Testament : that by means of His death for the redemption of those transgressions which were under the former testament, they that are called may receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where there is a testament the death of the testator must of necessity come in. For a testament is of force after men are dead : otherwise it is as yet of no strength, whilst the testator liveth. Whereupon neither was the first indeed dedicated without blood. For when every commandment of the law had been read by Moses to all the people, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop : and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, saying : This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. The tabernacle also and all the vessels of the ministry, in like manner, he sprinkled with blood. And almost all things, according to the law, are cleansed with blood : and without shedding of blood there is no remission.' (Hebrews ix, 15-22.)

The reader will have observed the transition from the idea of covenant to that of testament ; the same word *διαθήκη* as a matter of fact expressing both. This idea of testament is

dear to S. Paul, and we find it not only in this passage from Hebrews, but also in Galatians iii, 15-17 : and it is in perfect harmony with the true conception of the Eucharist. 'There are testaments of which the law prescribes that they shall be written by the hand of the testator ; but the law of the testament of Jesus Christ is that it must be confirmed, and as it were written, by His blood. The instrument of this testament is the act by which it is written, that is the Eucharist. The promises of Jesus Christ and of the new inheritance are made to us by the death of Jesus Christ, who thus rescues us from Hell and assures us of heaven : and the act in which that promise is drawn up, the instrument in which the will and testament of our Father is written, this act, this instrument, is wholly written in His blood : in a word, His testament is the Eucharist itself.'<sup>1</sup>

But even all this does not exhaust the meaning of the Eucharistic mystery, as it appeared to the Apostles on the evening of the supper. On Sinai, Moses sprinkled the blood of the covenant over the book and the people ; but he did not give it to them to drink. The sacrifice of expiation is thus described :

'[That he may enter into the sanctuary, Aaron] shall offer a calf for sin, and a ram for a holocaust . . . he shall offer the calf : and praying for himself and for his own house, he shall immolate it. . . . He shall take also of the blood of the calf, and sprinkle with his finger seven times towards the propitiatory to the east. And when he hath killed the buck-goat for the sin of the people, he shall carry in the blood thereof within the veil ; as he was commanded to do with the blood of the calf, that he may sprinkle it over against the oracle.' (Lev. xvi, 3-15)

In chapter xvii there are similar rules for the expiatory sacrifices offered by the Israelites, and here we note especially the prohibition of the eating of the victim's blood :

'If any man whosoever of the house of Israel, and of the strangers that sojourn among them, eat blood, I will set My face against his soul, and will cut him off from among his people. Because the life of the flesh is in the

<sup>1</sup> Bossuet, *61<sup>me</sup> journée*.



blood ; and I have given it to you, that you may make atonement with it upon the altar for your souls, and the blood may be for an expiation of the soul. Therefore I have said to the children of Israel : No soul of you, nor of the strangers that sojourn among you, shall eat blood.' (Lev. xvii, 10-12.)

We know that this prohibition was always scrupulously observed by the Jews. When it was a question of regulating the admission of Gentiles to the Church, they were dispensed from circumcision, but were bidden to abstain from things sacrificed to idols and from blood and from animals killed by strangulation, and from fornication (Acts xv, 29). The reason for this abstinence is very clearly given in the chapter of Leviticus from which we have just quoted : ' The life (the soul) of the flesh is in the blood : and I have given it to you that you may make atonement with it upon the altar for your souls. Thus by the death of the victims their blood was offered a first time to God, to whom, instead of his own life, the guilty man offered this life of the victim that he had put in his place. And this offering became still more explicit in the second act of sacrifice, which consisted in sprinkling the blood of the victim over the altar ; by which expressive symbolism the life was in this sense returned to Almighty God ; being, by that very act, placed beyond the lawful reach of any man. Even apart from sacrifice, the Israelite always refrained from consuming blood : it belonged to God ; and man respected it. At most, as in the sacrifice of the Covenant, the blood would be sprinkled over the people to consecrate them by its contact and draw them nearer to their God.<sup>1</sup>

But in instituting the Eucharist Christ set up quite other laws than these. No doubt this great sacrifice has many features recalling those of the Old Testament. As the sacrifice of expiation opened the Holy of Holies to the High Priest so has the Blood of Christ given access to heaven !

' Neither by the blood of goats or of calves, but by His own blood, entered once into the Holies, having obtained eternal redemption.' (Heb. ix, 12.)

And in the same way this blood, thus shed for us, purifies and saves us ; it is ' the sprinkling of blood which speaks

<sup>1</sup> On all this cp. Westcott, *Epistles of S. John*, pp. 34-37 ; *Hebrews*, 295-7.

better than that of Abel' (ibid. xii, 24) ; the blood that sanctifies us (xiii, 12) ; the blood that cleanseth us (1 John i, 7) ; that washes us from our sins (Apoc. i, 5) ; that has redeemed us to God (v, 9) ; that has washed the robes of the martyrs (vii, 14) ; that has enabled them to overcome (xii, 11). All these aspects of the redemptive virtue of the precious blood had been more or less clearly symbolized by the Old Testament sacrifices. But what is new is our Lord's command to drink His blood, an order given to the Apostles, and through them to all Christians alike. This means that He took upon Himself His Blood, like His sacred Flesh, for our sakes alone ; so that from the moment of His Incarnation He belongs to us. He is offered to the Father as our ransom, but, at the same time, He is given to us as the rule of our life. For it is none other than this that we find in the precious blood : ' He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath everlasting life ' (John vi, 55) ; so while in the Old Law the blood of the sacrificial victims, and indeed of all animals, is forbidden to the Jews, because ' the blood is in the life,' it is for that very reason that the Blood of Christ is given to us now. The uncertain life of an animal, God forbids us to touch ; but that eternal and Divine life that we find in the Blood of Christ, He offers us ; nay, much more, He commands us to receive.

But we have not yet exhausted the meaning of this great mystery, as it was foreshadowed in the Old Testament and understood by the first members of the Church. Among their animal sacrifices the Jews not only had expiatory sacrifices offered for sin, but also sacrifices of thanksgiving and peace. In these, one part of the victim, the fat, was burnt ; the breast and right shoulder were given to the priest ; and the rest was left at the disposal of the offerer himself (Lev. vii, 29 ; xix, 5 ; Deut. xii, 6). So God returned to His worshipper a portion of what He had received from him, and, to quote Philo (*De vict.*, viii, 221), invited him to his table. The heathen, too, all had their sacred feasts, which S. Paul had to forbid his converts to frequent ; in doing so, he reminds them of the Eucharistic feast, the sacred meal of the Christian Church (1 Cor. x, 14-21) :

' Wherefore, my dearly beloved, fly from the service of idols. I speak as to wise men : judge ye yourselves what

I say. The chalice of benediction which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? And the bread which we break, is it not the partaking of the Body of the Lord? For we, being many, are one bread, one body : all that partake of one bread. Behold Israel according to the flesh. Are not they that eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar? What then? Do I say that what is offered in sacrifice to idols is any thing? Or that the idol is any thing? But the things which the heathens sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils and not to God. And I would not that you should be made partakers with devils. You cannot drink the chalice of the Lord and the chalice of devils ; you cannot be partakers of the table of the Lord and of the table of devils.<sup>1</sup>

The Corinthians might object that an idol is nothing ; ‘ No doubt,’ replied the Apostle, ‘ but this religious feast is something.’ It was a true partaking in the idolatrous repast offered to the demon, just as the religious feasts of the Jews put them into communion with the altar, uniting them to God. And to keep them from such participation S. Paul reminds these Christians that they were sharers in the Table of the Lord. In so doing he throws light on another aspect of the Eucharistic mystery, explained by Bossuet in the following passage : ‘ These words of our Saviour : “ Take, eat, this is My Body given for you,” show us how, just as the Israelites of old were not only united in spirit to the sacrifice of the victims offered by them, but actually ate the flesh immolated as well, this was a sign to them of their own part in the oblation. So Jesus Christ, having made Himself our Victim, has willed that we should effectively eat the flesh of this sacrifice, so that the actual partaking of this adorable Flesh might be to each of us in particular a perpetual witness that it is for us that He has taken it and that He has sacrificed it for us.’<sup>2</sup>

It remains to notice another detail in this Supper of the Lord, and that by no means the least important. ‘ Do this for a commemoration of Me,’ our Lord said. These words,

<sup>1</sup> To bring out more clearly the meaning of this passage, Fr. Prat (*Théol. de S. Paul*, I, 160) compares it with various invitations to sacred meals found in the Oxyrhynchus papyrus : ‘ Cheremon begs you to dine at the table of the Lord Serapis, in the Serapeum, to-morrow, that is the 15th, at the ninth hour.’

<sup>2</sup> *Exposition de la doctrine catholique*, x.

preserved by S. Paul (with reference to the consecration of both our Lord's Body and Blood, and by S. Luke referring to the consecration of His Body), clearly show what our Lord's intention was. It was not only that He wished to give His disciples a sign of His love, but that He was instituting a permanent rite ; and what He did then, they must do after Him, in memory of Him. This capital point was for a long time outside all controversy ; but since the end of the last century it has been extensively denied. On this subject Frankland wrote in 1902 : ' In the last ten years a vague scepticism has tended to obscure what during eighteen centuries had been considered an indisputable fact.'<sup>1</sup> These denials do not spring from difficulties inherent in this particular subject, but from a general system of interpretation of the Gospel history. For those who see in Jesus nothing but the blind promoter of a messianic movement, such an institution as the Eucharist is sheer nonsense. It supposes not only a church and a priesthood, but a continuance and a permanence which for the critics in question would have meant the very negation of our Lord's dreams. He, so they think, was awaiting with a naïve confidence the final catastrophe in which the whole universe would be destroyed ; and therefore would never dream of instituting rites and sacraments for ages which He could not foresee.<sup>2</sup> Such a theory is in direct conflict with the words of S. Paul, whom these writers wish to regard as the author of the institution of the Holy Eucharist. But that Apostle expressly regards it as part of the tradition that he had himself received. He had 'received' it of the Lord, and his intimate knowledge of the facts and their mysterious meaning had been revealed to him by none other than Christ Himself. But these very facts also came to him from the primitive tradition, as can be seen by a comparison of his narrative of the Supper with that of the Synoptics ; all evidently proceed from the same source, which they faithfully

<sup>1</sup> *The Early Eucharist* (Cambridge, 1902), p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> Loisy argues as follows (*Synopt.*, II, 540) : ' Jesus' words give no hint, either of the foundation of the Church or of the organization of Christian worship. They may imply His own death and resurrection, but they certainly do not affirm them. Like all Christ's teachings they keep in view the prospect of a speedy messianic coming. We can see clearly enough how this prospect was marred by events, but less clearly how, after the Passion, it was possible for faith to find in the effective eucharistic words the Christian Sacrament of later times. The historian can only seek for this explanation apart from the main facts. By an examination of the

reproduce. It is the same then with this tradition as with that to which S. Paul refers a little later on, when speaking of the death and resurrection of Christ. There, too, there is a whole collection of facts which the Apostle has received and passes on, and in addition a religious teaching that interprets these facts in the light of Divine Revelation. 'Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures : and . . . He was buried ; and rose again the third day according to the scriptures. . . .' And if we inquire whence this tradition had been derived by S. Paul, we are carried back to the church at Jerusalem where the convert of Damascus betook himself about A.D. 38 or 39, less than ten years after the death of Christ. On this subject Cremer, a Protestant theologian, has remarked : ' This resemblance gives so much weight to the Apostle's testimony that we are obliged to admit that no fact is better established than the institution by Jesus Himself of the Supper, for the community founded by Him.'<sup>1</sup>

For the rest, this testimony of S. Paul is confirmed by the primitive usage of the Church at Jerusalem, where from the beginning we find the celebration of the Supper taking place (Acts ii, 42, 46), while even our opponents recognise that it was from there that S. Paul received the rite, the use of which he had established at Corinth.<sup>2</sup> And we can go further back still to these words of Christ which we know through the witnesses who have recorded them : ' Do this for a commemoration of Me.'

resurrection narratives we shall see that the faith in the risen Christ was closely linked with the primitive conception of the Eucharist. Jesus was already the Christ in the glory of His kingdom ; but at the same time He was still with His followers ; and especially in the common meal which gathered the faithful round it, and which was already the marriage-feast of the kingdom, at which our Lord's disciples were His welcome guests. The meeting took place with Him and in memory of Him. Even during our Lord's earthly ministry the common meal was already the external link within the apostolic band. S. Paul does no more than interpret this tradition in accordance with his own conception of Christ and salvation, in such a way as to see in the eucharistic meal the effective symbol of the union of the faithful in the ever-living Christ, the memorial of the crucified, of Him who had delivered up His body and poured out His blood for the salvation of the world. He must have been the first to conceive and represent this Christian custom as an institution founded on a wish of Jesus as expressed and symbolized in the Last Supper.'

<sup>1</sup> Art. *Abendmahl*, *Realencyklopædie f. protest. Theol.*, I, p. 33.

<sup>2</sup> Jülicher, *Theol. Abhandlungen*, p. 234. This theologian believes that he can explain this primitive usage by supposing that the Church made the mistake of regarding as an institution what, for our Lord, was only a parable. This thesis has been effectively refuted by Batiffol, *L'Eucharistie*, p. 62.

It may be objected that this command is found only in Luke and Paul, and is missing in Mark and Matthew. Yet this should not surprise us. All readers of the Synoptics are accustomed to these accidental omissions found in one and supplied in another : and we may add with Batiffol (p. 59) : ' We cannot help stressing the arbitrary method by which those witnesses who speak are silenced in order that we may hear those who say nothing.' But we can go further than this. This command, which has not been expressly recorded by Matthew and Mark, is sufficiently revealed by all the circumstances of the paschal meal, as described by them. ' The decisive fact that settles the question (of the institution) in the affirmative sense is not so much the formula preserved by Paul and Luke as the general attitude of our Lord, who evidently wished to retain the Passover, but with a new meaning. The institution of the Christian rite was implied and contained in the celebration of the paschal meal. The repetition of a precise command was not necessary, for it sprang from the very fact of the celebration of the rite itself.'<sup>1</sup>

We have lingered a little over this discussion, because the importance of the subject requires it, involving, as it does, a point essential in religion and also in the history of our Lord. Let us suppose, for a moment, that we admit the interpretation of our opponents : what are we to make of the Last Supper then ? No doubt it remains an impressive meal, but calling for pity rather than for admiration. In this His last hour, Jesus is still so much under the spell of His chimerical hopes that He sees nothing but a brilliant apotheosis at the very moment when the shadow of the Cross is growing upon Him more and more. Soon disillusion will come upon Him with crushing force, but His disciples recover themselves, under some unknown influence, transforming His dreams into an institution of the most fruitful kind. Let us turn from glosses of this sort and read the Gospels once again : and we shall find something very different indeed. Truly the last hour was imminent, but foreseen, accepted, nay, desired ; and beyond that blood-stained horizon lay the immense perspective of the Church's life. The death to which Christ was going in no way gave the lie to His dreams, rather it was the consecration of His redemptive wish. He had come to save the world, and He would save it by the Cross that His enemies had prepared

<sup>1</sup> Lobstein, *La Doctrine de la sainte Cène* (Strasbourg, 1889), p. 80.

for Him themselves. And yet this unique sacrifice is not enough. This one sacrifice, which was to take the place of all others from henceforth abrogated, was to be renewed unceasingly to the end of time, and unceasingly, too, would the faithful come to partake of it, truly receiving the Victim who is there immolated, and who fills them with life. So this institution of the Supper enables us to penetrate into the inmost life of Christ. In a few hours the powers of darkness would lay hold upon Him, dragging Him before His judges and executioners and to Calvary itself ; but this violence had to be first accepted and willed by Him : ‘ No man taketh (My life) from Me, but I lay it down of Myself.’ And this freedom of choice was apparent at the Supper, too. ‘ This is My Body, which is given for you ; this is . . . My Blood, which shall be shed for you ’ ; this oblation which was to cost Him so dear would never be forgotten by His Church ; and she would continually remind herself of it by this memorial, which would not be a mere symbol or image, but a living and true reproduction of it. And to the end of time all Christians would be able to assist at this saving sacrifice, and to share in it even more effectively than at Calvary, since in Holy Communion they receive the very Victim immolated for them.

And this institution of the Eucharist throws light on yet another aspect of the Gospel narrative. On several occasions Jesus promised His Presence to His disciples : ‘ Where there are two or three gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them ’ (Matt. xviii, 20) ; ‘ Behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world ’ (xxviii, 20). But it is especially in S. John, in the discourse after the Supper, that we find these promises repeated the greatest number of times : ‘ I will not leave you orphans, I will come to you. Yet a little while and the world seeth Me no more. But you see Me because I live ; and you shall live ’ (xiv, 18), and so many other passages that will come before us again very soon. No doubt, not all these passages relate to the Eucharist : some of them may only denote a moral assistance, while others refer to the coming of the Holy Ghost ; but if we take them all together they imply a permanent and effective presence of Jesus among His faithful ; and it is in the Eucharist that this presence is most completely fulfilled.

If we consider our Blessed Lord’s work in the state it was on

the eve of His death, we can justly say that it existed so far only in outline. His revelations are incomplete : ' I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.' The Jews were scarcely persuaded as yet ; the rest of the world had not been affected at all. It was not to be thought of that Jesus would leave His Church to face this immense task alone. No doubt He would send her His Holy Spirit, but He willed also Himself to abide in her, to guide and quicken her, and to crown her efforts with fruit. And indeed He might well say : ' It is expedient to you that I go,' and this was true not only because of His Holy Spirit's coming, but also because His own abiding Presence with them, in the Eucharist, would be more intimate and full of blessing than had been His sojourn on the earth.

And now, at the end of this Eucharistic meal, we can better understand our Lord's meaning when He said : ' With desire I have desired to eat this Pasch with you before I suffer.' Here He was not only expressing the natural wish once more to share this sacred meal with His disciples, but, too, His burning desire, in this very meal, to give them and His disciples in every age this supreme mark of His love. And we have no difficulty in understanding why Jesus wished to connect this institution with the great memorial of the Passover. He was the Lamb of God as, at the Jordan, the Baptist had already proclaimed Him to be ; by His Blood He was about to take away the sins of the world, so it was His Will that His death should take place on the very day and at the very hour when the Jews were sacrificing the Paschal Lamb, so that all might understand that the true Paschal Lamb was Christ Himself : *Pascha nostrum immolatus est Christus*. But this one sacrifice of the Cross was to be represented to the end of time by the Eucharistic sacrifice, of which all Christians would be bound to partake. This new repast, this supper of the Christian world, He instituted in the course of the Paschal meal ; our Lord being thus able to consecrate the New Covenant with His Blood, and to set up in His Church this holy sacrifice, of which the Paschal Lamb had been merely the type, and which would be for them the source of life and purity, of unity among themselves, and union with God.

' And when they had sung an hymn, they went forth to the Mount of Olives' (Mark xiv, 26). At the Passover, after the third cup, was sung the second part of the Hallel,



that is Pss. cxv-cxviii;<sup>1</sup> this is probably the hymn mentioned in Mark and Matthew. Repeated at such a moment, after the institution of the Eucharist and on the very road to the Passion, these Psalms would take on a meaning of a new and poignant kind.

‘Not to us, O Lord, not to us : but to Thy name give glory. For Thy mercy, and for Thy truth’s sake : lest the Gentiles should say : Where is their God ? But our God is in heaven : He hath done all things whatsoever He would. The idols of the Gentiles are silver and gold, the works of the hands of men.’ (Ps. cxiii, 2nd part, 1-4.)

‘I have loved, because the Lord will hear the voice of my prayer. Because He hath inclined His ear unto me : and in my days I will call upon Him. The sorrows of death have compassed me : and the perils of hell have found me. I met with trouble and sorrow and I called upon the name of the Lord. O Lord, deliver my soul.’ (Ps. cxiv, 1-4.)

‘Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints. O Lord, for I am Thy servant : I am Thy servant, and the son of Thy handmaid. Thou hast broken my bonds. I will sacrifice to Thee the sacrifice of praise : and I will call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows to the Lord in the sight of all His people : in the courts of the house of the Lord, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem.’ (Ps. cxv, 15-18.)

According to Mark and Matthew, it was at this moment that our Lord foretold to the Apostles their own dispersion and flight, Luke and John placing the incident a little earlier, in the cenacle itself. This slight difference is without significance. What is important to notice is the very fact of this painful prediction, after the supper, and with Gethsemane almost in sight. As His custom was, our Lord took the words of a prophet upon His lips : ‘Awake, O sword, against my shepherd and against the man that cleaveth to me, saith the Lord of Hosts. Strike the shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered’ (Zacharias xiii, 7). It would seem that the shepherd to whom the words referred directly, was the King Sedecias, who was about to be

<sup>1</sup> The followers of Shammai recited Pss. cxiv-cxviii; those of Hillel, Pss. cxv-cxviii (Beer, note on *Pesachim*, x, 7).

stricken by the Assyrians, and the whole people, representing his flock, would be scattered by the blow. But Jesus applied these words to Himself: much more than Sedecias He was truly the shepherd of those gathered around Him, whom He had found wandering as sheep without a shepherd. In a few hours the Good Shepherd Himself would be stricken, and the whole flock thrown into confusion. But this was too much for Peter and he made his famous protest: 'Although all shall be scandalized. . . I, never.' If we take them literally the Apostle's words are certainly highly blameworthy on account of the presumption that they reveal, of their contradiction of our Lord's direct statement, and of the spirit of exclusive self-confidence in which Peter puts himself above the rest. But we shall judge less severely if we recall Peter's impulsive disposition and his ardent love for our Blessed Lord. He did not feel his weakness, but he was conscious of his passionate affection; and his mistake lay in building on his impulses and entrusting himself entirely to them, instead of humbly accepting the advice that he had received. So Jesus insisted '... before the cock crow thou wilt deny Me thrice;' but He did not leave the matter there; rather He was careful to foretell the recovery together with the fall;<sup>1</sup> just as while predicting the dispersion of the whole band, He once more foretold His own resurrection: 'After I shall be risen again, I will go before you into Galilee.' Here once again, as so often before, we see the divine method of instruction, the most terrible predictions being fulfilled against a background of glory. In a few hours, dispersion, flight, death; but soon the resurrection and reunion in Galilee.

The peculiar form of the warnings and prophecies, as recorded by Luke, call for remark: 'Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat, but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not.' Here there half opens before our eyes the unseen world in which our Lord lived at the same time as He lived the life of earth; here below we

<sup>1</sup> S. Augustine comments thus on this passage: '*Noli extolli presumendo: non potes modo: noli deici desperando: sequeris postea.*' John's account (xiii, 36-8) of this short dialogue is as follows: 'Simon Peter saith to Him: Lord, whither goest Thou? Jesus answered: Whither I go, thou canst not follow Me now: but thou shalt follow hereafter. Peter saith to Him: Why cannot I follow Thee now? I will lay down my life for Thee. Jesus answered him: Wilt thou lay down thy life for Me? Amen, amen, I say to thee, the cock shall not crow, till thou deny Me thrice.'

see only human sufferings and struggles, but in that beyond there exists a world of enemies and friends, the one company watching over us, the other pursuing us with relentless hate. It is this world from which our Lord half drew the veil when He said of little children that 'their angels in heaven always see the face of My Father who is in heaven' (Matt. xviii, 10); or whose presence we seem to feel when we read His words: 'I saw Satan like lightning fall from heaven' (Luke x, 18). In that world, as here below, He reigned as Master, so far as He would. He could, if He so desired, summon to His aid twelve legions of angels (Matt. xxvi, 53), and His Father would send them without delay; equally, He could bind Satan in chains; He would deliver Himself into his power, but would never abandon to him His own. Very soon, in the Garden, He would be saying to the soldiers sent to take Him: 'If, therefore, you seek Me, let these go their way,' and the Apostles went free; and just as He restrained the power of the Jewish officers, so He held the demons in check. Satan had wished to destroy the eleven as he destroyed Judas; but Jesus had prayed for them, and especially for S. Peter, who would be converted, and henceforth every unstable and, so to speak, fluid element in his character would be transmuted into the firmness of a rock upon which the whole Church would rest: 'and thou, being once converted, confirm thy brethren:' surely these words echo those of Cæsarea Philippi: 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church. And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.'

#### *IV. The Discourse after the Supper.*

The long discourse to which we must now turn is found only in S. John's Gospel, where it holds a place analogous to that held in S. Matthew by the Sermon on the Mount; but between the two there is a great difference in significance and tone. The Sermon on the Mount was spoken at the beginning of our Lord's ministry, before a great crowd: the Discourse after the Supper brought to a close the final teachings of Christ, which were confided to His little band of disciples. Besides, there is an intimate tone about it which the Sermon lacked, and it unveiled mysteries that in the earlier utterance were left obscure. In commenting on this discourse, S. Augustine begins as follows: 'I implore

you of your charity, my dear brethren, to be attentive to this discourse which our Lord addressed to His disciples before His Passion, for it is deep indeed ; he who would comment on it must make a great effort ; and he who listens must neglect nothing.'

The discourse begins with a cry of triumph : ' Now is the Son of Man glorified ; and God is glorified in Him ' (xiii, 31). The glorification of which our Lord speaks is, in the first place, that He was surrounded only by pure souls : ' You are clean, but not all,' He had said only a very short time before ; but now Judas had left,<sup>1</sup> and only the faithful ones remained with Him in the cenacle. S. Augustine sees in this a sort of prelude to what will take place at the last day : the goats being driven far from the Son of Man, and the sheep alone remaining near Him in the glory of the Father. Still this is only a subordinate meaning, the essential feature of His glory being the sacrifice our Lord was about to make.<sup>2</sup> In S. John's Gospel the Passion of Christ is habitually represented as the glorification of His Father and of Himself. For this death of Christ is the greatest possible sign of love and worship : it is the supreme homage rendered to God, and there could be nothing more conducive to God's glory, nor to that of the Sufferer Himself. From that moment the Passion had begun ; the traitor had gone out to lay his snare : the Son of Man was delivered ; and in that very fact was glorified. Yet at once His thoughts turn to those He is about to leave, and His affection for them pours itself out in profoundly moving words :

' Little children, yet a little while I am with you. You shall seek Me. And as I said to the Jews : Whither I go

<sup>1</sup> ' When he therefore was gone out, Jesus said : Now is the Son of Man glorified.'

<sup>2</sup> vii, 39 : ' . . . as yet the spirit was not given, because Jesus was not yet glorified ' ; xii, 16 (Palm Sunday) : ' These things His disciples did not know at first : but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written of Him, and that they had done these things to Him ' ; xii, 23 (the Greeks) : ' The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified. Amen, amen, I say to you, unless the grain of wheat falling into the ground die, itself remaineth alone. But if it die it bringeth forth much fruit ' ; xii, 27 : ' Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say ? Father, save me from this hour. But for this cause I came unto this hour. Father, glorify Thy name. A voice, therefore, came from heaven : I have both glorified it and will glorify it again.' We shall find this expression several times in this discourse (xiv, 13 ; xv, 8 ; xvii, 1, 4, 5, 10). Later (xxi, 19), the evangelist will apply the same expression to S. Peter's martyrdom : ' And this he said signifying by what death he should glorify God.'

you cannot come : so I say to you now. A new commandment I give unto you : That you love one another, as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love one for another.' (John xiii, 33-35.)

Never had our Lord spoken in so tender a tone.<sup>1</sup> The first word was one of farewell. The parting was at hand, and the Apostles did not understand it yet. Ever haunted by their impatient dreams they were far from foreseeing that long years would be passed in obscure and perilous toil, far away from their Lord. 'You shall seek Me.' A moving prediction to be fulfilled so forcibly in days to come. To be near to Christ, that was the one wish of the Apostles here below : S. Paul's epistles are full of it, and the Apocalypse ends with the cry : 'Come, Lord Jesus !'

Nor did our Lord stop there. Before leaving His own, He gave them His last behest. He was giving Himself utterly for them, and in a few more hours would take place His sanguinary death ; and He asks of them only one thing—brotherly love among themselves. 'A new commandment I give unto you.' 'This is My commandment' (xv, 12). No doubt it was not entirely new, for it had been given to the disciples many times before, in the parables, and, earlier still, in the Sermon on the Mount ; but what gave it its new force was the example of our Lord Himself. ' . . . As I have loved you.' After the washing of the feet they had heard Him say : ' . . . I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so do you also : ' and indeed it was a lesson of humility and mutual regard. And now mutual charity was the burden of His speech, preached by His example most of all. It was a new and decisive step in the Gospel teaching ; and from henceforth the imitation of Christ will be one of the Christian's greatest sources of strength. If S. Paul bade his faithful to follow him as he followed Christ, it was on that last sacred evening of our Lord's life that the disciples received that all-urgent incentive and perfect rule. It would be above all on the foundation of Christian charity that this effort of imitation was to be made, and it was by this characteristic that the likeness of Christ was to be reproduced in themselves : let the Apostles remember what they had seen, and better still what they

<sup>1</sup> This expression : 'little children' is only found in this place in the gospel ; it occurs many times in S. John's epistles.

had themselves experienced of the love of Christ, and let them reproduce it in their own lives. Such an appeal came with peculiarly moving force when made at such a moment by our Lord—after the Supper and at the point of going to His death. The spirit of self-immolation which, not content with one act of sacrifice, is willing to be perpetuated and renewed without end, forms a model, the perfect following of which is infinitely beyond us, but which is none the less our rule, short of which no one has the right to stop. It was on this evening that the Christian family was founded and that all Christians became one in Christ. Before long, after Pentecost, it would be said of the Christians in Jerusalem that they were of one heart and soul, and, despite the weaknesses incidental to any group of men, this characteristic would remain, as Christ willed, the distinctive note of His disciples. ‘They love each other even before they know each other,’ would say Minucius Felix of the Christians later on; while the satirist Lucian would remark: ‘Their Master has made them believe that they are all brothers.’

This thought, however, could not turn away the attention of S. Peter from the first words of Christ, and the announcement that He was about to go away: ‘Lord, whither goest Thou?’ (36). Peter has only one thought: to go with our Lord. He had not even understood what had just been said about charity; he was wholly preoccupied by the one idea: the Master was going to leave them, and why could not they go too? Here we have the same impetuosity as formerly on the lake, when Peter asked Jesus that he might go to Him, walking upon the water. He was uneasy at the slightest suspicion of distrust; he felt so sure of himself! And now, without distinctly foreseeing the future, he felt the approaching crisis, with its accompaniments of prison and death; and he thought himself ready for it all. We already know our Lord’s reply, sad and firm, but, at the same time, with hope or rather assurance for the future: ‘thou shalt follow hereafter.’

Our Lord’s words to S. Peter were bound to increase the consternation of the disciples. Throughout the evening there had been a series of terrible predictions (xiii, 21, 33, 36) and we have no difficulty in imagining the mournful silence that would have followed this last reply. So our Lord hastened to reassure them. ‘Let not your heart be troubled:

you believe in God : believe also in Me.' So the Vulgate : but the Greek may also be rendered : ' You believe in God and you believe in Me,' which we are inclined to prefer as more expressive, and better representing the movement of faith as directed with the same fervour towards the Father and the Son. Then our Lord spoke to them familiarly of heaven as of His Father's house : ' In My Father's house there are many mansions. . . . I go to prepare a place for you.' Their thoughts may well have flown to the Temple, God's house here below, whose spacious and splendid buildings had often struck them with amazement, but these were nothing to the riches of heaven. There were dwellings innumerable, which our Lord was going to prepare for them. It was thus that, in the desert, ' the ark of the covenant went before them [the Israelites] for three days, providing a place for the camp ' (Num. x, 33). So would Jesus go before them : ' which we have as an anchor of the soul, sure and firm, and which entereth in even within the veil : where the forerunner Jesus is entered for us, made a high priest for ever according to the order of Melchisidech ' (Heb. vi, 19, 20). So this departure, the very thought of which had filled them with dismay, was only the act by which their Master took possession of their eternal abode ; and He would return and take them with Him so that all would meet once more. And having thus consoled them He added with gentle condescension : ' Whither I go you know, and the way you know.' But Thomas persists : ' Lord, we know not whither Thou goest. And how can we know the way ? ' thus calling for Christ's great declaration : ' I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No man cometh to the Father but by Me. If you had known Me you would without doubt have known My Father also ; and from henceforth you shall know Him. And you have seen Him.'

We know Thomas in this mood. He loved his Lord and was devoted to Him, but he was easily cast down. It was he who before the raising of Lazarus said : ' Let us also go that we may die with Him ; ' and who after our Lord's resurrection would only believe when he had touched His hands. And here, before these statements of our Lord, so sublime and encouraging to faith, he remains mournful and cast down. ' How can we know the way, when we do not even know where you are going at all ? '

As usual, our Lord wasted no time over the difficulties

proposed, but went on with His teaching gently and patiently, replying indirectly by new statements to the questions that had been raised : ' I am the way, and the truth, and the life.' So, not long before, in answer to Martha's hesitating confession of faith, ' I know that he shall rise again, in the resurrection at the last day,' He had been content to reply : ' I am the resurrection and the life.' Face to face with these souls, believing, devoted, but weak, He would not pause for discussions that would only tire them still more ; preferring to set before them the fundamental truths of Christianity, supporting their wavering faith on this rock alone.<sup>1</sup> If we wish more explicitly to compare these three terms, while keeping within the limits of our Lord's own explanations, we may say that He is the Way, just because He is the Truth and the Life. And He is all this by a title transcendent and unique ; there is no other way of going to the Father, because Jesus is His only Truth and Life.

And then straightway He led His Apostles in thought to what must be their goal ; the Father Himself. He was the object of their love and desire, and the ultimate aim of the whole teaching of the Son of God ; but as yet they knew Him not, because they did not know the Son Himself. Still Jesus replied : ' From henceforth you shall know Him, and you have seen Him.' In other words, in spite of their imperfect faith they believed in Him : recognizing Jesus as the Son of God, they necessarily began to know the Father too. But it was only a beginning and could not satisfy their desire :

' Philip saith to Him : Lord, show us the Father : and it is enough for us. Jesus saith to him : Have I been so long a time with you and have you not known Me ? Philip, he that seeth Me seeth the Father also. How sayest thou : Show us the Father. Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father in Me ? The words that I speak to you, I speak not of Myself. But the Father who abideth in Me, He doth the works.' (John xiv, 8-10.)

<sup>1</sup> On this passage it is a pleasure to re-read the comment in the *Imitation*, III, 56 : ' Ego sum via, veritas et vita ; sine via non itur, sine veritate non cognoscitur, sine vita non vivitur ; Ego sum via quam sequi debes, veritas cui credere debes, vita quam sperare debes.' On the saying attributed to Al Hallâj, ' I am the Truth,' cp. L. de Grandmaison, *Jésus Christ*. II, 77, 78.



This fresh interruption emphasizes the familiar character of our Lord's conversations with His disciples. There could be no more sublime teaching than that given on this evening, and no more solemn setting for it, and yet the dialogue remains what it had always been : a father's conversation with his children. And at the same time Philip reveals to us something of his own disposition and those of the other Apostles ; still blind to supernatural truth but already desiring it or, rather, desiring nothing else : ' Show us the Father, and it is enough for us.' No doubt he was thinking of the theophany of Sinai and of the promises of the prophets. Isaias had said, speaking of Messianic days, (xl, 5) : ' And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed : and all flesh together shall see that the mouth of the Lord hath spoken.' Surely the hour was come when this promise should be fulfilled ? Might not the Apostles be able to repeat the Psalmist's words : ' I shall be satisfied when Thy glory shall appear.' All that was natural enough among the Jews, and, unfortunately, they still were Jews.

And, with poignant sadness, our Lord comments on the fact. ' Have I been so long a time with you and have you not known Me ? Philip . . .<sup>1</sup> he that seeth Me seeth the Father also. How sayest thou : Show us the Father ? ' Many times have we noticed this painful surprise on the part of Christ when confronted with the lack of intelligence of the disciples and the crowds ; but never had any misunderstanding so keenly affected Him as this. This union of the Father and the Son is the very being of Christ ; His human nature depends on it ; His teaching radiates from this light. And yet this mystery has not yet penetrated to the understanding of His disciples, who have loved Him so long, who have had Him before their eyes and listened to His words : ' O ye sons of men, how long will ye be thus dull of heart ? '

Once again, patiently, Jesus takes up His familiar teaching : ' Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father in me ? The words that I speak to you I speak not of Myself. But the Father who abideth in Me, He doth the works.' This reciprocal interpenetration of the Father and the Son appears in the words and works of Christ. He is in the Father ; all that He says is the Father's teaching, conveyed

<sup>1</sup> The apostrophe ' Philip ' marks the depths of our Lord's emotion. Cp. ' Mary ' (xx, 16) : ' Simon, son of Jonas ' (xxi, 15).

by Him. Again, the Father is in Him, and all that He does is done by the Father Himself. And this declaration of His is confirmed by the proof that He is always ready to give. 'Otherwise believe Me for the very works sake.'

And having thus strengthened and enlightened His apostles' faith, Jesus returned to the subject of His instruction—His departure to His Father's side :

'Amen, amen, I say to you, he that believeth in Me, the works that I do, he also shall do : and greater than these shall he do. Because I go to the Father : and whatsoever you shall ask the Father in My name, that will I do : that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you shall ask Me anything in My name, that I will do.' (John xiv, 12-14.)

Our Lord has been speaking of His works as a proof of the Father's presence in Himself, and it might be asked if all that would disappear with Him when He left the world. And the answer would certainly be : No. Christ would still perform His works—His Father's works—that His Father might be glorified in Him ; nay, they would be even greater works than those He had wrought on earth. This has sometimes been understood in the sense that there would be more and more striking miracles than those of Christ's earthly ministry, but this may well be questioned even as to the fact. It is difficult to see how there can have been more startling miracles than the raising of Lazarus from the dead ; and, as far as the number is concerned, we must remember that 'if they were written every one, the world itself . . . would not be able to contain the books that should be written' (John xxi, 25). It would seem more correct to see a reference here to the gifts of the Spirit, the *charismata*, the spiritual favours of every kind, which Christ did not bestow during His life, and which, since His return to His Father, He has distributed with so bountiful a hand. This is the highest source of the glorification of God ; this the great revelation, the grand promise of the Son in these last days :

'If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will ask the Father : and He shall give you another Paraclete, that He may abide with you for ever : The Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth

Him not, nor knoweth Him. But you shall know Him : because He shall abide with you and shall be in you.' (John xiv, 15-17.)

This is the first occasion on which we find our Lord speaking clearly of the Holy Ghost. On several occasions He had held out the hope of this gift of God, but only in some promise remote and veiled. So He told Nicodemus : ' Amen, amen, I say to thee, unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God ' (John iii, 5, 6). And more explicitly at the Feast of Tabernacles : ' If any man thirst, let him come to Me and drink. He that believeth in Me, as the Scripture saith : Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water ' (John vii, 37, 38). And the evangelist adds : ' Now this He said of the Spirit which they should receive who believed in Him : for as yet the Spirit was not given, because Jesus was not yet glorified ' (John vii, 39).

And of that end, then looked forward to, the hour was now near ; the Spirit was about to come ; but He could only come among His own. So at the beginning Jesus said : ' If you love Me, keep My commandments,' and then, almost at once He went on to speak of ' the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive.'

Preparation, therefore, was necessary, and this the Apostles had received from Christ. They knew the Spirit and already He ' abode with them ' ; soon He would be in them ; always at hand to help. Soon He would hallow them as His Temple, and lay hold of them as the instruments of His works.<sup>1</sup> And if it were asked if the coming of another Paraclete would deprive the disciples of their Master's presence, the answer was, on the contrary, it would

<sup>1</sup> The reader will notice the special name here given to the Holy Ghost ' another Paraclete.' This expression is nowhere found in the New Testament, outside the writings of S. John, either in the discourse after the Supper (xiv, 16-26 ; xv, 26 ; xvi, 7) or in 1 John ii, 1 : ' If any man sin, we have an advocate [Paraclete] with the Father, Jesus Christ the Just.' The word is evidently used in the sense of advocate, in which sense it is also used in Rabbinical literature ; for example, in the saying : ' He who fulfils a precept makes sure of a paraclete ; he who commits a fault prepares an accuser ' (Westcott, 212). Jesus is our Paraclete and advocate ; the Holy Ghost will be another paraclete ; this comparison between Christ and the Holy Spirit, this similarity of function, shows up both the personal character of the Holy Ghost, and the divinity of Christ. Cp. *Origines du Dogme de la Trinité*, p. 534. Lemonnier, *L'Esprit Saint Paraclet*, Rev. des Sc. Philos. et Théol., xvi (1927), pp. 292-307.

make it more secure. When the Son of God was made flesh it was by the operation of the Holy Ghost that Jesus was conceived in the Virgin's womb : and if He was to be born and to grow in the hearts of the faithful, it was through the Holy Spirit that that new birth must be brought about :

' I will not leave you orphans : I will come to you. Yet a little while and the world seeth Me no more. But you see Me : because I live, and you shall live. In that day you shall know that I am in My Father : and you in Me, and I in you. He that hath My commandments and keepeth them : he it is that loveth Me. And he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father : and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him.' (John xiv, 18-21.)

' In that day : ' this is a prediction of Pentecost, with the whole new dispensation that it would usher in.<sup>1</sup> Then, indeed, will Christ's faithful followers know that they are in Him and He in them, and this experience will make them understand, at last, something of the mutual indwelling of the Father and the Son. No doubt the relations are not identical, but they are analogous : there being, in both cases, a common sharing of life, and consequent mutual dependence and indwelling. It is by the faithful practice of the Christian life that we are introduced more intimately into the mysteries of the Divine life : ' You see Me : because I live and you shall live.'

<sup>1</sup> Some scholars, for example, Loisy, have seen in this passage a promise of the appearances of Christ after the Resurrection : an interpretation for which there is very little to be said. These appearances would only be short visits, and could scarcely be identified with the return and sojourn of our Lord that is spoken of here. Still less probable is the view that the reference is to the Second Coming of Christ. S. Augustine understands all these promises of the future life in heaven. '*In illo die, quando vivemus ea vita qua mors absorbebitur, cognoscemus quia ipse in Patre, et nos in ipso, et ipse in nobis ; quia tunc perficietur hoc ipsum quod et nunc inchoatum est iam per ipsum, ut sit in nobis et nos in ipso*' (Tract. 75, 4). No doubt all will find its full fruition in heaven ; but it is on earth in the daily Christian life that these promises begin to be fulfilled ; and it is this that Christ meant to make clear. That is no reason why the passage should be used to support the view that there is no distinction between the Holy Spirit and Christ, as is done by many Protestant theologians, notably Reuss, S. Jean, p. 287 ; *Théologie chrétienne*, II, 532 ; Holtzmann, *N.T. Théologie*, II, 516.

No doubt, the Holy Ghost will not come to the faithful without the Son of God coming too ; nay, we would add, without the Father coming with Christ and the Spirit, as Jesus would be saying very soon (v. 23). But all this follows from the indissoluble union of the Three Persons, and not from their confusion. Cp. *Origines du Dogme de la Trinité*, pp. 534 ff.

And to this love, awakened and fostered by the Holy Ghost in the soul, Christ responds with His love and the revelation of Himself: 'He that loveth Me . . . I will love him and manifest Myself to him.' No longer would Jesus be forced to say to His disciples: 'Have I been so long a time with you, and have you not known Me?' but rather, not now with sadness, but with certainty of being understood: 'He that seeth Me, seeth the Father also.'

Thus, to see the Father and the Son is the one aim of every Christian soul;<sup>1</sup> it is life eternal, and nothing less (xvii, 3); but the question arises: Why is it promised to a few faithful souls and not to the whole world?

'Judas saith to Him, not the Iscariot, Lord how is it that Thou wilt manifest Thyself to us, and not to the world?' (22). The question is a faint echo of the words of our Lord's brethren, before the Feast of Tabernacles: 'If Thou do these things, manifest Thyself to the world.' Beyond all question Judas believed in Christ, but he still expected that universal glorious and irresistible manifestation of which he had always dreamed: a revelation such as this, intimate, secret, and purely spiritual, reversed all his previous ideas, so that he could not help asking: Whence is this? What means this entire subversion of the original plan? And Jesus, as usual, went on with His teaching, without pausing to deal with the objection raised. 'If any one love Me, he will keep My word. And My Father will love him; and We will come to him and make Our abode with him.'

Our Lord will only manifest Himself to those who love Him, that is, who keep His words: He has just said it and He says it again now. He who loves thus will be loved of the Father and the Son, and They will make their abode with him. Such love and such indwelling is offered to all, but forced upon none; Christ gives it to those who love Him, that is *who keep His commandments*. Dread indeed is the power of the human will, which, as it pleases, can welcome or reject its God.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It will be remembered that this promise of Christ is the starting-point of the *Dialogue* of S. Catherine of Siena.

<sup>2</sup> Augustine comments (tr. 76, 2): 'Jesus thus explains why He will manifest Himself to His own and not to strangers, which He here calls the world; the reason being that He is loved by the one company and not by the other. . . . Judas' question concerned the manifestation of Christ; but

Then our Lord repeats and completes all that He has said about the impending separation between the disciples and Himself (25-31). He leaves them very imperfect still, quite unequal to the part they will have to play, and above all overwhelmed by the sense of impending disaster : yet He wishes them to be at peace and even full of joy. 'Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you. . . . Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be afraid.' In the first place, He repeats the promise of the Holy Ghost. The disciples are far from having understood their Master, as their questions that night are quite sufficient to prove. There were many things that He had not told them, many forgotten by them, many ill-understood ; but the Holy Ghost would come and would teach them all, bringing to their remembrance all that they had been told by Christ. This action of the Holy Ghost the Apostles were soon to experience ; most evidently in the case of him by whom the promise was related.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, the Apostles' teaching could have no other source than that of our Lord Himself ; only, under the action of the Holy Ghost they would grasp it as a whole, with a fulness and clearness unknown to them before.

'My peace I give unto you.' The usual form of salutation among the Jews was : 'Peace be with you,' but this was, in fact, little more than a formula, or at the most a wish. With our Lord it was a gift ; only He could give that confident assurance and that harmony without which there is no peace ; and He gave it without stint. And once again, He dispels the sadness and gloom of the Apostles, as He had done before. In spite of everything, however, He saw that He could not overcome the impression caused by His words :

the answer he received spoke of indwelling and love. There is, therefore an intimate manifestation of God, unknown to the wicked.' While a little further back, speaking of the Holy Ghost (tr. 74, 5), he had said : 'He cannot be truly seen and known of us, unless He is in us.'

<sup>1</sup> Cp. *Origines du Dogme de la Trinité*, p. 487. S. John is conscious of not having at first understood the full sense of our Lord's words. Thus, having recorded His prophecy, 'Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up,' he goes on : 'When, therefore, He was risen again from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this : and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had said.' And, later on, speaking of our Lord's entry into Jerusalem, he recalled the prophecies in which that event had been foretold, adding : 'These things His disciples did not know at the first : but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written of Him and that they had done these things to Him.'

'I go away ;' that was the cause of their sadness and distress. So with infinite delicacy He tells them : ' If you loved Me you would indeed be glad, because I go to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.' It is well known that the Arians misused this passage by way of proving that the Son of God was only half divine, and, therefore, inferior in nature to the Father. The reply lies in the text itself. No doubt Jesus is less than the Father ; but only in virtue of that humanity in which He will die and go to the Father in heaven. Of this only is there any question here, and not of the Divinity, which cannot be spoken of in terms of separation, departure, or return.<sup>1</sup> For the rest, in this very discourse, the perfect divinity of the Son of Man is clear enough. Speaking of His Father and Himself, He said : ' We will come to Him and make our abode with Him.' God alone could thus dwell with us, and God alone could thus associate Himself with the Heavenly Father in such a formula of perfect equality : ' *We* will come . . .' The same thought is suggested by the part played by the Holy Ghost, whose divinity was never doubted by the Apostles, and who is here introduced as He who, as another Paraclete, should succeed our Lord.

However, our Lord adds : ' I will not now speak many things with you. For the prince of this world cometh.' It would seem that Jesus was already conscious of this approach which, almost at once, in the Agony, would become more violent and aggressive in character. After the story of the temptation we read that : ' the devil departed from Him for a time ' (Luke iv, 13). He came back now : but he had no influence on our Lord. All others of the sons of men had put themselves in his power ; but the Son of God owed him nothing, and yet He was going to the death to which Satan had no dearer wish than to drag Him : and He gave the reason Himself : ' . . . that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father hath given Me commandment, so do I : Arise, let us go hence.' Formerly, at Capharnaum, when working one of His first miracles, our Lord had said : ' that you may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins . . .' (Matt. ix, 6). Now He wills to

<sup>1</sup> ' Per quod ergo Filius non est æqualis Patri, per hoc iturus erat ad Patrem, a quo venturus est vivos iudicaturus et mortuos ; per illud autem in quo æqualis est Gignenti Unigenitus numquam recedit a Patre ; sed cum illo est ubique totus pari divinitate, quam nullus continet locus ' (Augustine, tr. 78, 1). Cp. *Origines du Dogme de la Trinité*, p. 522.

give us a much more intimate revelation, and one more glorious for His Father and Himself; nor, as its pledge, is it too much that He should give His very blood. The glorification of the Father and the Son was in no sense the miracle-working activity so admired by the Galilean crowd; it was the whole-hearted acceptance of the Passion, as an act of obedience to the Father, and as the means of saving us from our sins.

### V. *The True Vine.*

'I am the true vine: and My Father is the husbandman. Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit, He will take away: and every one that beareth fruit, He will purge it, that it may bring forth more fruit.' (John xv, 1, 2.)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The sequence both of thought and of incident, in this passage, raises a question of which many solutions have been proposed. The last words of chap. xiv give the signal for leaving the cenacle; and they are of similar purport to the command given to the disciples after the Agony in the garden: 'Rise up: let us go' (Mark xiv, 42; Matt. xxvi, 46). Then our Lord saw the traitor coming; now He is conscious of the Devil's approach. Nevertheless the discourses go on for another three chapters, and at the beginning of chap. xviii, we read: 'When Jesus had said these things, He went forth with His disciples over the brook Cedron. . . . ' The question therefore arises as to where the discourses in xv-xvii should be placed. We can hardly suppose that these intimate outpourings of our Blessed Lord's soul had for their setting the streets of the town, congested with the Passover crowd. Some scholars have thought that Jesus, having given the signal to depart, rose up, but without leaving the cenacle (Maldonatus, Zahn, Knabenbauer, Simon, p. 539); while others place the discourses outside the town (Godet, Westcott); but to both theories many objections can be raised. Cp. Durand, p. 409. Moreover, it is not only the order of facts that needs explaining, but that of texts as well, since in chaps. xv, xvi a return is made more than once to ideas already expressed in chaps. xiii, xiv; cp. Bauer and Lagrange.

To solve these difficulties certain transpositions have been proposed. Thus in *A New Commentary* (p. 263), W. Lock writes: 'Many editors would rearrange thus: xiii, 1-30; xv; xvi: xiii, 31-38; xiv,' although he himself refrains from making such a rearrangement. Bernard thinks it ought to be made: *Introd.*, p. xx, and *in hoc loco*. These manipulations are both gratuitous and ineffective, as has been observed by Bauer, p. 183. Wellhausen (*Johann*, 77-80) and Ed. Meyer (*Ursprung*, I, p. 313) see in chaps. xv-xvii an addition of the redactor of the Gospel. This sweeping hypothesis is quite improbable: these three chapters are manifestly by the same author as chaps. xiii-xiv.

The solution that to us seems most likely is that proposed by several Catholic scholars (Lepin, Durand, Lagrange). In this view, chaps. xv-xvi are a supplement added to the previous chapters by the evangelist himself. The Discourse at the Supper had already been drafted and added to the main body of the narrative, when the evangelist, going over his recollections, added two intermediate chapters; not with a view to developing our Lord's words by His personal reflections, but in order to complete the first redaction' (Durand, p. 408).



Many times before, following the example of the prophets, Jesus had taken the vine and the husbandman as illustrations whereby to give His disciples a clearer grasp of their relations with Almighty God and with Himself ; now He repeats the same example, but in order to draw from it a lesson of a different kind. Up to the time of Christ, the Jews had seen in the vine the figure of a divine plantation, tended by loving care, yet refusing the fruits for which He looked ; but now Christ taught His Apostles that if the vine was to bear its fruit it must be by remaining united to Him ; on this condition it will be fruitful and laden with grapes ; otherwise it is simply wood for the fire.<sup>1</sup>

And the lessons of this parable are reinforced by the pressing exhortations of Christ : ‘ Abide in Me, and I in you. . . . Abide in My love.’

If the branches fall to the ground it is only because they have detached themselves ; not at all that they have been rejected by the vine : hence the command : ‘ Abide in Me, and I in you.’ That Christ should so abide in them depends on themselves. And the figure thus used by our Lord suggests another lesson still : without bearing branches the vine cannot live. It is only by them that it can be fertile and bear fruit. No doubt the grapes grow by the sap from the vine, but it is only on the branches that they shoot forth and mature. This figure makes plain the function of the humanity of our Blessed Lord. It is only for men’s sake that He has taken His human nature at all, only in and through men that it will bear fruit. Certainly, no individual is essential ; and there is no branch which may not be cut down and cast into the fire ; but the branches that thus fall will be replaced by others ; for the heavenly sap will never be without its fruit.

<sup>1</sup> Ezechiel had long ago said : ‘ Son of man, what shall be made of the wood of the vine, out of all the trees of the woods that are among the trees of the forests ? Shall wood be taken of it to do any work, or shall a pin be made of it for any vessel to hang thereon ? Behold it is cast into the fire for fuel : the fire hath consumed both ends thereof, and the midst thereof is reduced to ashes. Shall it be useful for any work ? Even when it was whole, it was not fit for work : how much less, when the fire hath devoured and consumed it, shall any work be made of it ? ’ (xv, 2-5).

Referring to this passage from Ezechiel, S. Augustine writes (tr. 82, 4) : ‘ Ligna itaque vitis tanto sunt contemptibilia si in vite non manserint, quanto gloriosiora si manserint ; denique, sicut de his etiam per Ezechielem prophetam Dominus dicit, præcisa nullis agricolarum usibus prosunt, nullis fabrilibus operibus deputantur. Unum de duobus palmiti congruit, aut vitis aut ignis ; si in vite non est, in igne erit ; ut ergo in igne non sit, in vite sit.’

This is a truth that will be expressed under another figure by S. Paul. Christ is the Head, we are the members, to whom life is impossible, except in union with the Head. But still it may be said that a head without members cannot be imagined ; if some members are unworthy and deserve to be cut off from the body of Christ, that is to say, the Church, others will take their place, but in one way or another the Church will come to its full growth, both here and in heaven above. And it will be the same with the mystic vine ; its sap is inexhaustible ; incessantly it will bring forth new branches until it covers the whole earth ; happy those who remain attached to it to the end !

Christ had already conveyed these mysteries in other parables, showing the unworthy guests of the Kingdom of heaven driven from the bride-chamber, and cast into the outer darkness or the fire. Here the warning is at once more urgent and more moving. The unity that must not be broken is Christ Himself, and those who sever themselves from it will no longer be spoken of as driven from the feast, but as cut off from the Body of Christ ; a severance fatal for them and painful for their Head. The rest live like Christ and by His life ; and their prayers are always heard, as are His.<sup>1</sup>

And then our Lord goes on to explain more definitely what is meant by abiding in Him : ' If you keep My commandments you shall abide in My love : as I also have kept My Father's commandments and do abide in His love.' Shortly before, He had already said : ' If you love Me keep My commandments ' (xiv, 15), and soon He would return to the matter again, for this Evangelist of love never loses Himself in clouds of idle contemplation, and in this farewell discourse, which is just one long outpouring of tenderness, the call to obedience is more insistent than it has ever been before. For the rest, our Lord was only applying to His disciples the law He had received and studiously kept ; and His words have a peculiar force, coming so soon after that other saying of His : ' that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father hath given me commandment so do I. Arise, let us go hence.' And in all this there was no sense of constraint, but only a great sense of exaltation and joy.

<sup>1</sup> ' If you abide in Me . . . you shall ask whatever you will : and it shall be done unto you ' (v. 7).

‘ These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and your joy may be filled. This is My commandment, that you love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends. You are My friends, if you do the things that I command you.’ (John xv, 11-14.)

In these few verses Christ promulgates His commandment anew, and once more puts forward His own example as that which should be the disciples’ rule in this affair. And His example is love unto death.

This lesson and example remained graven in the Apostles’ minds. ‘ . . . He hath laid down His life for us : and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren ’ (1 John iii, 16) : ‘ Christ also suffered for us, leaving you an example, that you should follow His steps ’ (1 Peter ii, 21) : ‘ . . . the charity of Christ presseth us . . . and Christ died for all ; that they also who live may not now live to themselves, but unto Him who died for them and rose again ’ (2 Cor. v, 14-15). Truly a compelling example, but higher than any of earth will ever reach ! The martyrs will be the ‘ disciples and imitators of the Lord,’ but distance is infinite between their sacrifice and His, and none are more conscious of it than the martyrs themselves.<sup>1</sup>

Our Lord passed over in silence most of the inimitable privileges of His own love. But there is one upon which He insisted, namely, that it was He who had taken the first step ; it was He who had chosen His friends ; those to whom

<sup>1</sup> Letter from the church of Smyrna on the martyrdom of S. Polycarp (xvii, 2, 3) : The Jews, knowing the devotion with which the Christians surrounded the holy martyr, requested the governor to refuse them the body, ‘ for fear,’ said they, ‘ lest they abandon the Crucified to give worship to this fellow.’ The redactors of the letter add at once : ‘ They did not know that we could never abandon Christ who suffered for the salvation of all those who are saved in the whole world : He, the innocent one immolated for sinners, nor could we render worship to another. For Him we adore as being the Son of God ; as for the martyrs, we love them as disciples and imitators of the Lord, and they are worthy of it through their supreme attachment to their Master and King.’ Cp. *Histoire du Dogme de la Trinité*, ii, pp. 204 ff.

The reader will like to see S. Augustine’s comment on these verses of S. John. He first quotes a text from Prov. xxiii, 1-2 : ‘ Si sederis cœnare ad mensam potentis, considerans intellige quæ apponuntur ibi ; et sic mitte manum tuam, sciens quia talia te oportet præparare.’ ‘ What,’ he asks, ‘ is the table of the rich, if not the table where we receive the Body and Blood of Him who has given His life for us ? ’ We must therefore prepare to serve in the same way, that is, give our life for our brethren, as Christ has given His life for us. So did the martyrs : ‘ talia enim suis

all His secrets were revealed, those for whom He was to die, had been chosen by Him, and had not themselves chosen Him. More than once the Apostles had seen in this calling only the sacrifice asked of them, regarding it above all as a mark of their generosity and love : ' Lord, we have left all and followed Thee ; what then shall we receive ? ' To-night, at least, He makes them understand that all the giving has been on His part, and that the only fitting attitude for them is that of gratitude for an unsolicited call, much more than one of complacent and, if need be, exacting consciousness of service given. ' You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you.' Then, having once more urged mutual charity upon them, our Lord forecasts the reception that awaits them here below :

' If the world hate you, know ye that it hath hated Me before you. If you had been of the world, the world would love its own : but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember My word that I said to you : The servant is not greater than his master. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they have kept My word, they will keep yours also. But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake : because they know not Him that sent Me.' (John xv, 18-21.)

Here Jesus puts before His Apostles the destiny in store for them, which is none other than His own. During these years of ministry with Him, they had had plenty of opportunities of seeing how His word had been received. Some had welcomed it with generous faith ; many had rejected it with bitter hatred ; and this would be their own experience too. They would gain many faithful disciples, but they would fall foul of the great mass, frantic with fanaticism and hate. And our Lord turns for a moment from these vistas of the future to consider the terrible blindness with which

*fratribus exhibuerunt, qualia de Domini mensa pariter acceperunt.* Yet, in spite of all the distance between them and Him, He has the power to lay down His life and to take it up again, but we cannot live as long as we wish and we must even die against our will . . . therefore, although brethren die for brethren, yet the blood of martyrs has not been shed like the Blood of Christ, to wash away the sins of their brethren ; in this respect we can admire His sacrifice but we cannot imitate it. But if the martyrs have truly been able to shed their blood for their brethren, it can only have been by the grace they received at this table of the Lord.'

He had been met : ' If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin : but now they have no excuse for their sin ' (22). No doubt, before Him, they had persecuted and slain the prophets, and He had, more than once, reminded them of the fact ; but, still, all these crimes might have been excused if they had not been followed by this sin committed against the Son of God, barefacedly, and in the sight of works such as none had ever wrought before. So, later, S. Stephen would reproach the Jews with their continual resistance to the Holy Ghost, of which their opposition to Christ had filled up the cup : ' Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted ? And they have slain them who foretold the coming of the Just One : of whom you have been now the betrayers and the murderers ' (Acts vii, 52). Then once again Jesus foretold to His apostles the terrible destiny that lay before them : excommunication from the synagogues, and a burning fanaticism that would believe that in persecuting them it was doing service to God. To men like the Apostles, attached to their fatherland and their national faith, such prospects were simply terrifying ; to be rejected of the synagogue and of Israel was, so to speak, to find themselves utterly out of their depth.<sup>1</sup>

All these sombre predictions are reserved by our Blessed Lord until His last few hours. While He was with His dis-

<sup>1</sup> These predictions should be compared with the instructions given to the Apostles after the Supper and recorded by S. Luke (xxii, 35-8) : ' When I sent you without purse and scrip and shoes, did you want anything ? But they said : Nothing. Then said He unto them : But now he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise a scrip ; and he that hath not, let him sell his coat and buy a sword. For I say to you that this that is written must yet be fulfilled in Me : and with the wicked was he reckoned. For the things concerning Me have an end. But they said : Lord, behold, here are two swords. And He said to them : It is enough.' This passage has no equivalent in the other Synoptics ; and its tone is very different from that of the discourse after the Supper. Here our Lord's predictions are veiled under figures and not made directly, as in S. John, but in both cases the meaning is sufficiently similar : The Apostles in their trial mission were welcomed with enthusiasm, profiting by the veneration that surrounded their Lord. But henceforward it would be different : their Master would be reckoned with the wicked, and themselves held suspect. So they must look to their maintenance and also to their defence ; just now, a cloak would be of less use to them than a sword. These counsels were given, less with the intention that they should be taken literally than to give the Apostles an idea of what their life from henceforth was to be. But once again the disciples could see nothing beyond the letter of our Lord's words : ' Behold here are two swords,' said they, and, with a sad smile, Jesus replied : ' It is enough.' He saw that they had not grasped His point, and so He pressed it no further : they would understand it later on.

ciples there was little use in saddening them with these distant previsions, so hard for their weakness to sustain ; but now He must tell them all, so that they might remember and be strengthened in the day of trial.<sup>1</sup>

And then, no sooner had He warned His apostles, than Christ restored their courage once again. So stricken were they by their Master's prophecies that they listened without question or remark. Just now they had been asking Him : Whither goest Thou ? but they did so no longer, and for this they were gently reproached by our Lord : ' . . . none of you asketh Me : Whither goest Thou ? But because I have spoken these things to you, sorrow hath filled your heart. But I tell you the truth : it is expedient to you that I go. For if I go not, the Paraclete will not come to you : . . . ' (John xvi, 5-7).

The coming of the Paraclete here foretold is sufficient in itself to show the divinity of Him thus promised. Only of a God could it be said that His coming was so precious that it would be gladly purchased at the cost of the absence of Christ Himself. And He would convince the world : in other words, the enemies of Christ. He would convince them of sin. The Jews took notice only of legal faults ; they strained out the gnat and swallowed the camel : in disbelieving in Christ they were guilty of the gravest sin, without suspecting its gravity in the least. But the Holy Ghost would convince them of it. And He would convince them of justice. On this point the error of Judaism was equally grave. Christ's enemies believed themselves to be just, like the Pharisee in the parable, and despised Jesus as one of the friends of the publicans and sinners : and in this folly they would be confirmed by the Passion itself. The Ascension, followed by the sending of the Holy Ghost, would show Jesus as reigning in the glory of the Father and triumphant over the world. Finally, the Holy Ghost would convince the world of judgement, on which subject the Jews deceived themselves no less than on that of justice and of sin. All they saw in it was a sanction for their national ambitions ; but judgement is something deeper and holier than that. It functions in the very soul and under the dictate of the

<sup>1</sup> No doubt we can find something analogous to this in the tenth chapter of S. Matthew ; but this discourse, related in connection with the first sending out of the Apostles, seems—as so often in S. Matthew—to have been formed by collating several of our Lord's discourses belonging to different periods of His life.

innermost dispositions of a man. And already the prince of this world was judged ; he had lost his empire for having made war upon the Just One ; and the Holy Ghost, promulgated at Pentecost, would take away his conquests and overthrow his rule.

Having thus outlined this action of the Holy Ghost on the world, our Lord returned to the Apostles themselves, warning them that they had much to learn, but promising them that the Holy Ghost would teach them all. Shortly before, He had said : ' I have called you friends, because all things whatsoever I have heard of My Father, I have made known to you ' (xv, 15). Still, He in no way contradicted Himself. He had told them all that they could assimilate, on His part without reserve ; but there were many things that they could not understand yet ; for example, the abrogation of Judaism and its rites, and the free admission of the heathen into the Church. These things the Holy Spirit would teach them, leading them into all truth. Christ is the Way (*ὁδός*) ; He will be their guide in the way (*ὁδηγός*), and this function He would discharge, not speaking of Himself whatsoever things He should hear ; receiving that which was the Son's.

This description is the most explicit revelation contained in the New Testament on the subject of the Holy Spirit's work, which it presents as something very similar to that of the Son of God. Several times did our Lord protest that He said nothing of Himself : ' My doctrine is not mine but His that sent Me.'<sup>1</sup> So will it be with the Holy Ghost : ' He shall not speak of Himself, but what things soever He shall hear, He shall speak.' Jesus is, above all, the accredited witness of the Father and of the heavenly mysteries : ' Amen, amen, I say to thee [to Nicodemus] that we speak what we know and we testify what we have seen, and you receive not our testimony ' (iii, 11). Similarly, the Holy Ghost gives testimony to the Son (xv, 26). Jesus has glorified the Father—it was His whole work here below—and He would be referring to it shortly in His last great prayer ; so would the Spirit glorify Him (xvi, 14). Finally, the Son has been sent by the Father, and in His turn, He will send the Holy Ghost (xv, 26 ; xvi, 7).

<sup>1</sup> Cp. ' . . . I have not spoken of Myself ; but the Father who sent Me, He gave Me commandment what I should say . . . And I know that His commandment is life everlasting. The things therefore that I speak, even as the Father said unto me, so do I speak ' (John xii, 49, 50).

Thus the relations between the Holy Ghost and the Son resemble those between the Son and the Father.<sup>1</sup> At the same time this analogy brings with it the essential differences ; thus, filiation is the characteristic feature of the relationship between the Father and the Son, but it finds no place in the theology of the Spirit. The Father is the single principle of the Son ; the same is not the case with the Son in relation to the Holy Ghost. The Son sends the Spirit, but only on behalf of the Father ; and it is from the Father that He receives all that He gives to the Holy Ghost. This whole doctrine is well summed up in the symbolical vision of the Apocalypse, xxii, 1 : ‘ . . . a river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God, and of the Lamb.’

These revelations give us a glimpse of what is most intimate in the Divine life. If we can get behind mere human words, the Son of God, and the Holy Ghost, appear to us as receiving everything from another, doctrine, operation and life, and in an irresistible movement of love and glory bearing all back to the source from which all proceeds, and to which all returns. And if our contemplation is to be faithful to the teaching of Christ, it can never see in either the Son or the Spirit a person who has his origin and term within himself ; eternally he receives all from another, and eternally, with all his energy, returns it to its source.

So it is that our Lord's discourse at the Last Supper completes His previous teaching concerning the Holy Spirit and Himself. From hence God is known to Christians, not at all as the God of the philosophers, but as the Living God. The patriarchs had believed in Him without having seen Him, and the prophets had handed on His oracles without revealing Him Himself. Alone, the Only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, was able to make Him known to us, and He has done so, introducing all His disciples and all His brethren within the intimacy of the Divine life. Inaccessible as He was, men had thought of Him as alone, and now they discover the existence of those outpourings of love in which the Three Persons give Themselves totally to each other, finding in each other Their

<sup>1</sup> Cp. *Histoire du Dogme de la Trinité*, I, 492 : ‘ This parallelism is very close, and when, in his letters to Serapion, S. Athanasius undertakes to defend and develop the traditional doctrine of the Holy Spirit, we find him choosing no other starting-point than this.’



whole satisfaction, and mutually bound together in the unity of a single nature. And this life, that seemed so far off, has seized men also in its grasp, to transform and make them one : ‘ That they all may be one, as Thou, Father, in Me, and I in Thee ; that they also may be one in us ’ ; this is the supreme prayer of Christ to His Father (xvii, 20-23) ; to this end would from henceforth be directed all the action of the Holy Ghost in the Church.<sup>1</sup>

Finally, we may notice our Lord’s description of this revelation that the Holy Ghost will communicate to the Apostles. Its source will be the Son of God Himself : ‘ He shall receive of Mine and shall show it to you.’ Its end will be the glorification of the Son of God : ‘ He shall glorify Me.’ And so, in Christianity, there is nothing that has not its origin or fulfilment in Christ. The first word of the Creed itself would be that profession of elementary faith that the Holy Spirit alone could inspire : ‘ Jesus is Lord.’ The object of that faith would never be wholly within our grasp, for it is none other than the inexhaustible riches of Christ ; and His glorification is its end. ‘ There is nothing essentially Christian that is not Divine, nothing Divine that cannot find its fulfilment and its centre in the Christian fact.’<sup>2</sup>

After these teachings on the struggle with the world and the revelation of the Holy Ghost, Jesus, returning to the thought of the coming separation, spoke to His Apostles a last word of farewell (xvi, 16-33), full of tenderness, emotion, and half-veiled revelations of truth. At the very first words the Apostles were discouraged, and led to ask among themselves : ‘ What is this that He saith : A little while?’ What, they wonder, can be meant by this short interval of time? Above all, they could not get used to the idea that Christ was going away before He had established His reign upon earth, and so could attach no meaning to His departure to His Father. And, as usual, Jesus anticipates their question, without, however, at first, replying to it in a direct way. Instead, He puts before them the lot that they must expect, tears and mourning, while the world is glad. From the beginning of His ministry, He had foretold the grief of those days that would follow His departure from their midst. ‘ . . . the days will come when the bride-

<sup>1</sup> Cp. *Le Dieu vivant*, p. 126.

<sup>2</sup> Godet, *in hoc loco*.

groom shall be taken away from them ; and then shall they fast in those days ' (Mark ii, 20). And He foretold it still, but now He impressed upon them that such anguish would bear fruit and be turned into joy, like that of a woman who brings a son into the world. This comparison was familiar to the prophets (Isa. lxvi, 6 ; Osee xiii, 13) ; and our Lord Himself had used it to describe the terrible anguish of the last days (Mark xiii, 9 ; Matt. xxiv, 8). And S. Paul in his turn would say to his faithful : ' My little children, of whom I am in labour again, until Christ be formed in you ' (Gal. iv, 19). And these hearers of Christ would know these griefs, terrible indeed, but followed by overwhelming joy.

The source of this joy would be our Lord's return : ' I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice. And your joy no man shall take from you.'<sup>1</sup>

This joy that our Lord promised them would be assured and full ; none would take it from them. Nor would they need to question Him any more, for they would receive all they asked, so that their joy would be full.<sup>2</sup> We may recall the prophecy of Jeremias :

' Not according to the covenant which I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt : the covenant

<sup>1</sup> What is meant by this ' return ' ? Some take it to be the Resurrection : Weiss, Lange . . . ; but what follows, especially vv. 25, 26, makes this interpretation very improbable. ' The hour cometh when I will no more speak to you in proverbs, but I will show you plainly of the Father. In that day you shall ask in My name.' All this is better understood of the spiritual presence of Christ after Pentecost, and Godet makes all these promises refer to that : ' The first " a little while " relates to the short space of time between that moment and His death ; the second, to the interval between His death and Pentecost ' (459). S. Augustine understands it to refer to the parousia : '*Modicum est hoc totum spatium quo præsens pervolat sæculum. . . . Non tardat Dominus promissum ; modicum, et videbimus eum, ubi jam nihil rogemus, nihil interrogemus ; quia nihil desiderandum remanebit, nihil querendum latebit. Hoc modicum longum nobis videtur, quoniam adhuc agitur ; cum finitum fuerit, tunc sentiemus quam modicum fuerit*' (tr. 101, 6). Westcott (on xvi, 20) considers that all these interpretations can be combined, and this seems the most probable view : ' These words, which had an immediate fulfilment in the experience of the Apostles before the Resurrection, and again before Pentecost, have also a wider application. The attitude of sorrow marks in one aspect the state of the Church until the return of Christ.'

<sup>2</sup> Cp. 1 John ii, 27 : ' . . . you have no need that any man teach you : but as His unction teacheth you of all things and is truth and is no lie. And as it hath taught you abide in Him.'

which they made void, and I had dominion over them, saith the Lord.' (Jeremias xxxi, 32.)

This, Christ would fulfil in coming to dwell with His disciples : He would be their Master, ruling from within, and they would not need to question Him, since they would carry the source of all knowledge within themselves. Further, this teaching would no longer be such as Jesus had given them on earth, by figures and parables, but He would speak to them openly and clearly, because He would speak to them immediately, appealing to their hearts. Augustine (treatise 102, 4) recalls S. Paul's words, spoken later on to his disciples : ' . . . we speak wisdom among the perfect ' (1 Cor. ii, 6). ' I . . . could not speak unto you as unto spiritual but unto carnal. As unto little ones in Christ ' (iii, 1) : ' we speak, not in the learned words of human wisdom, but in the doctrine of the Spirit, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the sensual man perceiveth not these things, that are of the Spirit of God ' (ii, 13). This comparison is most just, and shows up clearly what was still defective in the Apostles' equipment for directly understanding the mysteries of God. To this must be added the inherent imperfection of human language and the superiority of the Master speaking from within us, over any teacher who reaches us through our hearing, even if it be Christ Himself.

Then, too, will all their prayers be heard, since they are made in the name of Christ. ' Hitherto you have not asked anything in My name.' Our Lord had no intention here of reproaching the disciples with their lack of faith or trust, but He wished to make them understand that later, united to Him by the most intimate spiritual bonds, in that very union they would find all their strength in prayer. ' . . . I say not to you that I will ask the Father for you. For the Father Himself loveth you.' Here we have a thought of infinite delicacy expressed in some of the most moving words in the whole discourse. Jesus introduces His friends into the intimacy of the Divine life, and as sons in the true sense. Shortly before, He had spoken to them of His Father's kingdom as the paternal mansion in which He was going to prepare them an abode ; but now it is the Father Himself who appears as infinitely close to them, through love, the motive of which is their love of Jesus and their belief in

Him : but both love and faith are the Father's own gift. 'No man can come to Me except the Father . . . draw Him.' So this charity has its origin with God Himself ; and man can only receive it, and respond. 'In this,' S. John will say later, 'is charity : not as though we had loved God, but because He hath first loved us, and sent His Son to be a propitiation for our sins' (1 John iv, 10).

And then, in two words summing up His whole career, our Lord told them : 'I came forth from the Father and am come into the world : again I leave the world and I go to the Father.' Often before, and from the very beginning of His ministry, we have heard Him speak of His coming into the world, but here His statement is more explicit, and is made clearer by the contrast with His return. To the Apostles it came like a flash of light ; no more parables now, but the truth in all its transparent clearness. And in the joy of this illumination they cried :

'Behold, now Thou speakest plainly and speakest no proverb. Now we know that Thou knowest all things, and Thou needest not that any man should ask Thee. By this we believe that Thou camest forth from God.' (John xvi, 29-30.)

'Do you now believe?' In these words of our Lord, Godet sees an exclamation of joy. 'For Christ,' he says, 'it was a moment of ineffable sweetness : at last He is recognized and understood ; He, Jesus, by these eleven Galileans. That was enough for Him : for the moment, His work was finished, to be completed later by the Holy Spirit's glorification of Him in them, and, through them, in humanity at large. There was nothing left to do but to close the instruction and give thanks.' This interpretation seems to be supported by John xvii, 8 : ' . . . They . . . have known in very deed that I came out from Thee : and they have believed that Thou didst send me,' but it conflicts with the words of John xvi, 32 : 'The hour cometh that you . . . shall leave me alone.' Consequently S. Augustine (treatise 103, 3) sees here a question on our Lord's part. 'Do you now believe? Soon you will be in such discomfiture that you will abandon faith itself,' a prophecy which was at least verified in the case of the disciples at Emmaus. 'We hoped that it was He that should have

redeemed Israel.' At this moment their faith is sincere, but weak.

And no sooner had He foretold their defection than our Lord went on to make it clear to them that He found His support in His Father, and not in them. 'I am not alone because the Father is with Me.' And surely this was true of His whole life? He had spent it in doing good, and in radiating affection and devotion around Him, but without finding a single soul whose understanding of Him penetrated to the depths; and this isolation had been the rule of His whole life upon earth. Even the love of His Mother, so pure and so complete, had not been able to bridge this mighty gulf. His Father's love had been His joy and support, and He wanted none other in His last hour, in spite of the terrible desolation that He was to suffer in the sensible part of His being. 'The Father is with Me.' That was enough.

But if His Apostles could be no support to Him, He would be their strength; and His word was spoken to bring assurance to them. 'In the world you shall have distress. But have confidence. I have overcome the world.'

Having thus given all to them, as fully as He could in His mortal life, He turned to His Father to offer Him His last prayer. But even then He did not forget His disciples. Until then, He had always retired alone to pray: but now He remained in their midst and prayed aloud, a prayer which would thus be to them the most intimate of revelations, and of all possible consolations the most precious that can be conceived.

#### VI. *The Prayer of the Son of God.*

'These things Jesus spoke: and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said: Father, the hour is come. Glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son may glorify Thee. As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He may give eternal life to all whom Thou hast given Him. Now this is eternal life: that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent. I have glorified Thee on the earth; I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do. And now glorify Thou Me, O Father, with Thyself, with the glory which I had, before the world was, with Thee. I have manifested Thy

name to the men whom Thou hast given Me out of the world. Thine they were : and to Me Thou gavest them. And they have kept Thy word. Now they have known that all things which Thou hast given Me are from Thee. Because the words which Thou gavest Me, I have given to them. And they have received them and have known in very deed that I came out from Thee : and they have believed that Thou didst send Me. I pray for them, I pray not for the world, but for them whom Thou hast given Me : because they are Thine. And all My things are Thine, and Thine are Mine : and I am glorified in them. And now I am not in the world, and these are in the world, and I come to Thee. Holy Father, keep them in Thy name, whom Thou hast given Me : that they may be one, as We also are. While I was with them, I kept them in Thy name. Those whom Thou gavest Me have I kept : and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition, that the scripture may be fulfilled. And now I come to Thee : and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy filled in themselves. I have given them Thy word, and the world hath hated them : because they are not of the world, as I also am not of the world. I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from evil. They are not of the world, as I also am not of the world. Sanctify them in truth. Thy word is truth. As Thou hast sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for them do I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth. And not for them only do I pray, but for them also who through their word shall believe in Me. That they all may be one, as Thou, Father, in Me, and I in Thee ; that they also may be one in Us : that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me. And the glory which Thou hast given Me, I have given to them : that they may be one, as We also are one. I in them, and Thou in Me : that they may be made perfect in one : and the world may know that Thou hast sent Me and hast loved them, as Thou hast also loved Me. Father, I will that where I am, they also whom Thou hast given Me may be with Me : that they may see My glory which Thou hast given Me, because Thou hast loved Me before the creation of the world. Just Father, the world hath not known Thee : but I

have known Thee. And these have known that Thou hast sent Me. And I have made known Thy name to them and will make it known : that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them.' (John xvii, 1-26.)

Of all passages in the Gospel, this is beyond question the most intimate in tone. It is the last outpouring of the Lord's soul in prayer to His Father before going to His death, recommending to His care all that is dearest in the world. So simple and clear are its phrases that commentary seems useless ; and yet so profound that we should prefer to enter into their meaning in silence rather than make them the subject of speech.<sup>1</sup>

Jesus ' lifted His eyes to heaven,' where He has taught us to look for His Father ; whither fly with all their strength His own heart and mind. ' You are from beneath : I am from above,' He had told the Jews ; and to this heaven, from which He had never for a moment been severed, He turned in an outpouring of His whole soul. And at the same time He raises us thither, too. Unless we are to blind ourselves, like the publican we dare not even lift our eyes to heaven, most certainly not by ourselves alone : but we shall not hesitate, if we unite our prayer to the prayer of the Master who has already pierced the skies.

His first word is of joy and confidence : ' the hour is come.' A few days before, at His entry into Jerusalem, Jesus had groaned at the approach of this very hour (xii, 27) : ' Now' said He, ' is My soul troubled. And what shall I say ? Father, save Me from this hour ? But for this cause I came unto this hour.' In the garden Christ would give Himself up to this anguish afresh. But now He saw only the exceeding glory, the royal purple of the Passion displayed before His eyes : the glorification of the Son revealing His incomparable love and redeeming the world ; and the glorification of the Father, whose honour is vindicated and whose kingdom is established upon the earth.

<sup>1</sup> This is the advice given by Bossuet in his *Méditations* ; 39<sup>me</sup> journée : ' Read, then, and re-read, consider, ruminate, accept all the thoughts that come simply and naturally into your mind, hear all, weigh all, listen chiefly to what grips the heart, inclines towards God and Jesus Christ ; that which casts down, humbles, restores, causes to tremble, consoles ; and say within yourselves : All that is true, all that is just ; let us keep quiet here and listen in profound silence to the impenetrable mysteries of God.'

And at the same time Jesus asks, both for Himself and His members, that glory in which He had rejoiced with His Father from all eternity, before the creation of the world. Later, in the Apocalypse, the glory of the Son of God will appear under both aspects, as at the same time the incommunicable privilege of His divinity, and the reward of His sufferings upon earth.<sup>1</sup> S. John will sing of Him as the first-born of creation, the Lord of the kings of the earth, the King of kings and Lord of lords, but also : ‘ The Lamb that was slain is worthy to receive power and divinity and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and benediction.’ ‘ To him that shall overcome, I will give to sit with Me on My throne : as I also have overcome and am set down with My Father on His throne.’ It is this glory that Christ asks the Father here : it was His from all eternity, in the bosom of the Father, but He wishes to hold it from Him by a new title, after the triumph of His Passion has taken place.

Nor did He ask this only for Himself, but for all that are His. As He repeated over again, they belonged above all to the Father, who had given them to Him, and He had kept them faithfully to the end. Here we recognize a thought often expressed by our Lord, especially in the discourse at Capernaum :

‘ All that the Father giveth to Me shall come to Me : and him that cometh to Me, I will not cast out. Because I came down from heaven, not to do My own will but the will of Him that sent Me. Now this is the will of the Father who sent Me : that of all that He hath given Me, I should lose nothing : but should raise it up again in the last day.’<sup>2</sup> (John vi, 37-39.)

‘ Murmur not among yourselves. No man can come to Me except the Father who hath sent Me, draw Him. And I will raise Him up in the last day. It is written in the prophets : And they shall all be taught of God. Everyone that hath heard of the Father and hath learned cometh to Me.’ (vi, 43-45.)

<sup>1</sup> Cp. *Histoire du Dogme de la Trinité*, I, 466 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Similarly in the Temple at the Feast of Dedication (x, 27-30) : ‘ My sheep hear My voice. And I know them : and they follow Me. And I give them life everlasting : and they shall not perish for ever. And no man shall pluck them out of My hand. That which My Father hath given Me is greater than all : and no one can snatch them out of the hand of My Father. I and the Father are one.’



‘But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that did not believe and who he was that would betray Him. And He said : Therefore did I say to you that no man can come to Me, unless it be given him by My Father.’ (John vi, 65, 66.)

These last words show that the son of perdition had not been given by the Father to our Lord. We have here the same tone in which, later on, S. John would write of false teachers and Antichrists : ‘They went out from us, but they were not of us. For if they had been of us they would no doubt have remained with us. . . .’ Christ had spared no efforts to save this son of perdition ; during the last days, and especially the last hours, He had multiplied warnings, appeals, threats, advances ; and even in the garden when the traitor appeared He would say : ‘Judas, dost thou betray the Son of Man with a kiss ?’ But it was all in vain. Jesus could not find in this soul the faith that the Father had given to His children, and the faith that led them to put themselves unreservedly in our Lord’s hands. But the others were truly His : ‘They . . . have known in very deed that I came out from Thee : and they have believed that Thou hast sent Me.’ Besides the son of perdition, there are still other reprobates for which Jesus will not pray : these are ‘the world.’ In S. John’s writings in general, and in this very prayer, there are two senses in which this word is to be understood. Sometimes it is the universe created by Almighty God, and it is with this meaning that our Lord spoke of the glory that He had in the bosom of the Father before the creation of the world (vv. 5 and 24) ; but there is also the large number of our Lord’s enemies, condemned and lost, for whom He refuses to pray (v. 9). It is an easy transition from one sense to the other, for the whole creation has turned aside from and disowned its God : ‘the world was made by Him and the world knew Him not’ (i, 10) ; and again : ‘the whole world is seated in wickedness’ (1 John v, 19). And it was from the heart of this very corruption that the Apostles had been drawn by Almighty God (xvii, 6). This most important allusion makes it clear that the world is not a hell from which no one can escape ; on the contrary, it is from the world that God has drawn His elect, so that it is possible to escape from it, with His grace. And if Jesus here

refuses to pray for the world, He is represented elsewhere as the 'lamb . . . who taketh away the sins of the world' (i, 29) ; as the 'propitiation . . . for the sins of the whole world' (1 John ii, 2) ; and only just now He was saying to His Apostles : 'Have confidence, I have overcome the world' (xvi, 33). And by saying that, He assured them, not only that the world could do nothing against them, but that they themselves would make conquests over the world, by snatching from it souls to give to Christ.

Face to face with these adversaries, apparently so menacing, but in reality already conquered, was the little flock—the Apostles and those who later would believe on their word. Our Lord was leaving the world, and they were remaining behind ; better still, they were sent by Christ like sheep in the midst of wolves. The world hated them because it knew well enough that they belonged to it no more (14). Against this hatred they would be protected by Almighty God : 'I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from evil' (15). Their strength would be Christ's words which they had received and in which they believed (14) ; so were they in possession of eternal life. 'This is eternal life : that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent' (3). The knowledge of which our Lord was speaking here was not mere speculation, but knowledge loving and fruitful in daily life (1 John ii, 4, 5) : 'He who saith that He knoweth Him and keepeth not His commandments is a liar ; and the truth is not in him. But he that keepeth His word, in him in very deed the charity of God is perfected.'

By this life eternal, that is, by this knowledge of God and of Christ, God is with His children, a fact from which they derive invincible strength ; and here, again, the epistles are the best commentary on our Lord's prayer :

'You are of God, little children, and have overcome Him. Because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world. Therefore of the world they speak : and the world heareth them. We are of God. He that knoweth God heareth us. He that is not of God heareth us not.' (1 John iv, 4, 5.)

So our Lord's whole endeavour and the burden of His

prayer was to ensure for His Apostles that Divine union which could save their souls. 'I in them and Thou in Me : that they may be made perfect in one' (23). But this unity cannot exist without at the same time ensuring the unity of men among themselves : 'That they all may be one, as Thou, Father, in Me, and I in Thee ; that they also may be one in Us' (21) ; and here, again, we find a faithful echo of the doctrine in the epistle :

'We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not abideth in death.' (1 John iii, 14.)

'In this we have known the charity of God, because He hath laid down His life for us : and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.' (1 John iii, 16.)

'And this is His commandment : that we should believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He hath given commandment unto us. And he that keepeth His commandments abideth in Him, and He in him. And in this we know that He abideth in us by the Spirit which He hath given us.' (1 John iii, 23, 24.)

And in closing His prayer Jesus speaks to His Father with all the assurance of a beloved son. 'Father, I will that where I am, they also whom Thou hast given Me may be with Me, that they may see My glory.'

At the beginning He had said : 'This is eternal life : that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.' Already here below, this knowledge, born of faith, is indeed eternal life, but in the seed only, and in hope ; but the seed will grow, and the hope be fulfilled, when we see Him as He is, in that contemplation of His glory asked for us from His Father by our Blessed Lord.

This utterance of Jesus is among those passages of the Gospel bound to move most keenly the Christian heart : 'And not for them only do I pray, but for them also who through their word shall believe in Me.' We have believed through the Apostles' word, and, in that last hour, Christ has prayed for us, asking for us from His Father that vision face to face that is the goal of all our desire. He has asked

it with the assurance of a Son who has received from His Father the fullness of His Divine rights, and who has given and sacrificed all to Him in return : ' Father, I will.' This last will and testament of the dying Christ is the foundation, solitary but unshakable, of all our hope.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE PASSION OF OUR LORD

#### *I. The Agony.*

AT last we come to the decisive events of the Passion and Resurrection of our Blessed Lord ; the goal of all His desires, and the end to which was directed His whole life. ' I have a baptism wherewith I am to be baptized ; and how am I straitened until it be accomplished ! ' The Incarnation itself is only to be understood as a first step towards this end : and on Palm Sunday, when He felt the first tremors of the coming agony, we hear Him exclaim :

' Now is My soul troubled. And what shall I say ? Father, save Me from this hour. But for this cause I came unto this hour. Father, glorify Thy name. A voice therefore came from heaven : I have both glorified it and will glorify it again.' (John xii, 27, 28.)

This trial, at once terrible and glorious as it was, was the keystone of the divine plan, and upon it the whole structure of our salvation rests. ' . . . I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to Myself ' (ib. 32). All the fruitfulness of our Lord's ministry is drawn from Calvary alone ; and this was His own teaching on the occasion to which we have just referred : ' Amen, amen, I say to you, unless the grain of wheat falling into the ground die, itself remaineth alone ; but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit ' (xii, 24).

To every Christian the story of our Lord's terrible sufferings must bring an emotion of poignant grief ; and all right-minded men must be moved to indignation when they contemplate the cruelty and injustice of His foes. Such sentiments are too natural for us to attempt to conceal them ; but, natural as they are, they are *human* sentiments, which, in our present task, must be kept under restraint. The writer of our Lord's life must take as his model the evangelists, whose love for their Master far surpassed our own, and whose emotion, especially that of John, the eye-witness of

the whole drama, was infinitely keener than we could ever conceive. And yet their narrative is of the nature of a repressed emotion which moves us much more than heart-rending cries would do. They understood well enough that silence was imposed on them by their very respect for the Victim they adored. Contemplating the death and agony of the Son of God, a man's impressions must be such as to make him hold his peace. This reserve, or as Pascal puts it, this 'admirable coolness' of the evangelists, was the highest tribute they could render to Him before whom, in self-annihilation, they sank. Like them, we will be careful not to hide the Cross by a veil of human emotions, however natural they may be : our every effort will be to make Jesus Christ seen and understood.

The first act of the drama is the most mysterious, but it is the one that helps us to understand best wherein the true nature of our Lord's Passion lay. In the courts of Caiphas, Herod, Pilate, and on Calvary itself, our Lord's enemies, so to speak, will obstruct the view, hiding from careless eyes the two great actors of the drama : Christ and His Father. In the garden they are together alone. It is true that, surrounding them, we are conscious of the presence of supernatural persons, angels or devils ; but their part is secondary, scarcely distinguishable by the eye of faith. But before its vision stands out in clear light the Lamb laden with the world's sins, and God whom those sins have offended and whom the Saviour's painful death is to reconcile with the world. And most certainly this is no matter of chance. It was our Lord's will that, on the very threshold of His Passion, that mystery should appear to us in its simple and intimate truth, so that through all that follows, our glance may remain fixed on those supernatural depths which He has revealed to us, and which give its meaning to all the rest.

'When Jesus had said these things, He went forth with His disciples over the brook Cedron, where there was a garden into which He entered with His disciples.' (John xviii, 1.)

Thus S. John begins the story of the Passion, linking it closely with the sacerdotal prayer that He had recorded just before. We have read this prayer ; and we shall see how it lights up the episode of the Agony in the Garden, which we have to consider now.

We read in the *Acts of the Martyrdom of S. Polycarp* (vii), that when the soldiers sent to seize him arrived at the house where he had taken refuge, the Saint was resting in an upper room. He came down at once, welcomed the men familiarly, had a meal prepared for them, and only asked them to let him pray to God before they led him away. Then, full of grace from on high, this old man of eighty-six prayed aloud for two hours. The Christians present listened in admiration, while the officers themselves were amazed and confused at having arrested this old man, full of the spirit of God. And the Saint recommended to God all those, great and small, whom he had known, and then the whole Church throughout the world, and the struggle he was about to sustain for the Lord's sake, by which his days would be brought to an end. Then he gave himself up to his enemies, and was by them dragged away to death.

And so it was with our Lord's sacerdotal prayer. The King and Master of all martyrs is about to be betrayed, condemned, crucified ; and marching in advance of His visible enemies comes the demon, there and then to attack Him anew. And before submitting Himself to these final assaults, Jesus prays, and in His prayer are unveiled the innermost depths of His soul, showing the infinitely close union between the Father and the Son.

Now is revealed the source of energy of our Redeemer's life. That calm assurance, never once impaired, and that transparent sincerity could have had no source other than this close union with the Father in heaven. 'I and my Father are one,' He had said not long before, in words that made us feel the unity of power and action of the Father and the Son, and the impression is renewed in the superb saying : 'All My things are Thine, and Thine are Mine,' and again in that supremely confident prayer : 'Father, I will that where I am, they also whom Thou hast given Me may be with Me.' At the same time we feel, too, and still more keenly, the intimate character of this blissful union which is set before us as the ideal model of our union with God and among ourselves : 'That they all may be one . . . as we also are one. I in them and Thou in Me : that they may be made perfect in one.'

There truly lies the secret that gives us the key to this whole life of our Lord. On each separate occasion as it arises, we are conscious of the treasures of tenderness and

affection that are poured out upon all men. We have only to recall His pity for the multitude who were without a shepherd, the look of love cast on the young man who asked Him what there remained to be done in order to become perfect, the tears over Lazarus' tomb ; and this affection, so tender, compassionate and generous, is at the same time entirely detached. The greatest of the Saints have found comfort and consolation in the affection of their disciples and their friends. So it was that S. Paul could write (2 Cor. vii, 6 : ' . . . God who comforteth the humble, comforted us by the coming of Titus ' ; and to the Philippians (ii, 27) : ' . . . he (Epaphroditus) was sick, nigh unto death, but God had mercy on him. And not only on him, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.' We have here sentiments profoundly human in character, and we love the humble sincerity with which they are expressed ; but with Jesus we find nothing of the sort. Certainly there is a spirit of aloofness, not stoical isolation, but the complete detachment of a heart that gives all to men, without asking anything in return. It is S. Paul himself who records our Lord's words : ' It is a more blessed thing to give rather than to receive.' This happiness had always been His : even with His holy Mother, we never find that He claims her affection as a support of which He has any personal need. And if we ask whence comes this supreme detachment in a Heart so prodigal of love, the answer is given by Christ Himself, in words spoken to His Apostles near the end of the discourse in the upper room (xvi, 32) : ' Behold, the hour cometh, and is now come, that you shall be scattered every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone. And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me.' There lay the treasure of infinite richness, which the world could never take away, and it was enough.

But we can understand what the agony would be if God were to withdraw Himself ; this would mean that in one instant would fail not only a consolation and support, but the whole life of the soul. But it may be asked how such a support could ever be lacking in the case of our Lord, who, in the Beatific Vision, was always in possession of the contemplation of God. We admit that there is a mystery here which we make no claim to solve. We can, however, try to understand it better by having recourse to comparisons



the least unworthy to be recalled here, namely those that can be drawn from the lives of the great mystical authors and saints. S. Teresa thus describes one of the trials of contemplative souls (*Life*, ch. xx) :

‘ All at once the soul feels within herself an indescribable longing for Almighty God, and in an instant, pierced through and through by this longing, she enters into such an ecstasy of pain, that she seems altogether raised above herself and all created things. God places her in so vast a desert that even by the greatest efforts she cannot find one single soul to bear her company ; besides, if she could, she would not. She has no other wish than to die in this solitude. Although, at those times, God seems to be very far removed from the soul, yet often He reveals to it His supreme glories in a manner so extraordinary as to surpass anything that we can conceive. Besides, there are no terms with which to express it, and in my judgement it is necessary to have experienced it to be able to imagine it or even to believe that it exists. The end of this sublime communication is not to comfort the soul, but to show her how justly she afflicts herself at beholding herself absent from a good containing in itself all other goods. At this sight, the soul feels her hunger and thirst for God increase, as also the sense of her own solitude. She becomes a prey to a pain so subtle and piercing, and feels herself in a desert of such unrelieved desolation, that she can exclaim literally with David : “ I have watched and am become as a sparrow, all alone upon the house-top.” In this state the soul seems to be herself no more, but, like the sparrow on the roof, she dwells solitary in the highest part of herself, commanding all creatures from this height ; nay, I would go further, and say that it is above her own self that she has her abode. From time to time, while in this state, I remembered S. Paul’s saying that he was crucified to the world . . . something similar takes place in the soul at that time. She gets no consolation from heaven, where she no longer dwells, nor from earth, to which she cleaves no more, and from which she wills to receive nothing ; she is truly crucified between heaven and earth, a prey to suffering, without receiving consolation from either side. From heaven, it is true, there comes to her that admirable knowledge of God of which I have spoken, far surpassing all our desires ; but such a sight of God increases rather than diminishes her torment, since she is still more inflamed

with the desire to possess Him for herself. So great, at times, is the intensity of her suffering that she seems to lose feeling altogether ; but, as a matter of fact, this last effect does not endure for long. All this is like the last pangs of death ; but in the midst of all this anguish, there is so great a joy that I know not to what it may be fitly compared. It is an unspeakable martyrdom, made up at the same time of pain and delights. So far from wishing to seek the least relief in the pleasures formerly presented by the world, the soul cannot bear the sight of them, casting them far from her with a supreme disgust. She knows well that she wishes for nothing but her God, but there is no special characteristic that she loves in Him ; she simply loves all that He is, without knowing at all what she loves. The powers of the soul, in this case, are suspended by her pain, as they are by pleasure where the experiences of union and transport are undergone.'

No doubt this admirable passage is very far from introducing us to all the secrets of the agony of Christ. The union of the Son with the Father is something infinitely closer than that between the greatest saint and his God can ever be ; but there still remains a certain analogy between the two. 'That they all may be one . . . I in them and Thou in Me : that they may be made perfect in one.' In the same way the knowledge of the divinity possessed by our Lord's human soul is quite different from that given by the highest graces of contemplation to the souls of saints. In short, it was the beatific vision ; but it is true also that the intuitive vision of God is the end towards which supernatural contemplation tends, without, however, reaching it here below.

And so these mystical sufferings, although at an infinite distance from the agony of God's Son, are a participation in it all the same. Especially we may notice what this saint says of the suffering of the soul, 'crucified between heaven and earth, a prey to suffering, without receiving consolation from either side.' That seems to me to be one of the truest expressions of the sufferings of our Blessed Lord.

On this mystery a passage from S. Thomas may throw further light (III<sup>a</sup>, Q. 46, 7, 8). To the question whether Christ, in His Passion, suffered in His whole soul, the holy doctor gives this reply : 'We may consider either its essence or its faculties when we are speaking of the soul. Now, with

regard to the essence, it is certain that the soul suffered in its entirety, since the soul is entirely present in every part of the body, and cannot, without suffering, be severed from it. If, however, we consider its faculties, they all suffered, inasmuch as they all depend on the essence of the soul which itself was suffering at that time. So far as their proper operations are concerned, the lower powers were tormented by manifold pains ; but the higher reason found in its object, which is God, not pain but joy.' And in *Article 8 S. Thomas* asks whether, in the Passion, the whole soul of Christ rejoiced in the Beatific Vision, and he replies in the same way : ' If we consider the essence of the soul, it rejoiced as a whole, since it is the subject of the higher reason, as a whole ; but if we consider the powers of the soul, the joy of this reached the higher powers alone ; for the Beatific Vision cannot be the proper act of the lower powers. Nor could it be in any way reflected within them as will be the case in heaven. For, Christ not being yet entered into this glory, this joy that He never ceased to experience could not affect the body nor the lower powers of the soul. On the other hand, the intelligence was not hindered in its contemplation by the sufferings of the sensible faculties, nor by those of the body itself.'

No doubt all this is very mysterious, and no Christian will be surprised at the fact. On the contrary, he would be distrustful of a naïve psychology, that rashly claimed to furnish the secret of the life, sufferings and happiness of the Son of God, and adequately to translate these transcendent realities in terms of the humblest experiences of our own lives. But we must once more assert that the experiences of the mystics do cast some light into these unsoundable depths. ' All this,' says S. Teresa in the passage quoted above, ' is like the last pangs of death, but in the midst of all this anguish there is so great a joy that I know not to what it may be fitly compared. It is an unspeakable martyrdom, made up at the same time of pain and delights. . . . The powers of the soul, in this case, are suspended by her pain, as they are by pleasure where the experiences of union and transport are undergone.'

Finally, we must observe that the higher powers of the soul themselves, namely the intelligence and the will, had their own proper pains in the agony of Christ. They suffered from the horror and the shame of sin that our

Saviour had to bear, the intolerable burden of which He felt more than anyone else could possibly have done.<sup>1</sup>

These truths, doubtless very mysterious, but most certain, must determine our attitude before the Passion of our Blessed Lord. We approach it with all our heart's love, with all its sorrowful compassion, but also with all the adoration within our power. On Good Friday our tabernacles are empty, but Holy Church makes us bend our knees before the Cross. And this is that we may understand that, even in His most cruel humiliations, He who had not any longer even the face of a man, He who, in the prophet's words, became as a worm of the earth, is, none the less, the Son of God, in closest union with His Father, and contemplating His glory at that very hour :

'Then Jesus came with them into a country place which is called Gethsemani. And He said to His disciples : Sit you here, till I go yonder and pray. And taking with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, He began to grow sorrowful and to be sad. Then He saith to them : My soul is sorrowful even unto death. Stay you here and watch with Me.' (Matt. xxvi, 36-38.)

'And going out, He went, according to His custom, to the mount of Olives. And His disciples also followed Him. And when He was come to the place, He said unto them : Pray, lest ye enter into temptation.' (Luke xxii, 39, 40.)

A comparison of these texts will at once reveal certain differences between the two accounts. S. John omits the agony, while the three Synoptics relate the moral sufferings of our Lord, with, however, a closer resemblance between S. Matthew and S. Mark. S. Luke is more independent, neither mentioning the choice of the three privileged ones nor describing our Lord's anguish, except in so far as it is revealed in His prayer. But these are unimportant differences.

The spot to which Jesus went with His disciples is called by Matthew a 'country place'; by Mark, a 'farm'; John calls it a garden (xviii, 1). 'It was,' writes Lagrange

<sup>1</sup> The following proposition was condemned by Innocent XII, 1699 : '*Inferior Christi pars in cruce non communicavit superiori suas involuntarias perturbationes.*' But it remains true that the highest part of the soul was always enlightened by the intuitive vision.

(*S. Marc*, p. 386), 'no doubt a small field planted with olive trees, with a press ; such a rustic installation as was to be found in great numbers in Palestine, and still is to-day. According to John xviii, 1, this garden was beyond the brook Cedron, was fenced in, and was a frequent resort for Jesus and His disciples.' The incident recorded in Mark (xiv, 51-52), of the young man with the linen cloth about his naked body, seems to imply that there was a dwelling-house there, occupied by friends of our Lord. Finally, the part played by Judas implies that Jesus was in an enclosed space, to which an entry had to be made without suspicion being aroused. The emissaries of the Sanhedrin had no need of the traitor's services to discover where Jesus usually went in the evenings, a fact which everyone in Jerusalem would know ; but they wished to make their way in to Him without at the very outset provoking resistance of an armed kind.<sup>1</sup>

Many a time had Jesus passed the night in prayer, as we have seen, at the beginning of His ministry (Mark i, 35), and often since then, especially on the eve of decisive events, such as the choosing of the Apostles would have been (Luke vi, 12). But no previous events were comparable to these of which the hour was now at hand ; it was the final struggle and also the great temptation. Satan did not appear in visible form in the garden, as he did in the desert, but there is no doubt that he attacked Christ there and the Apostles as well. This is the great encounter at which Luke hints (iv, 13) in his account of the temptation in the wilderness : 'And all the temptation being ended, the devil departed from him for a time.' It was this return that our Lord already felt to be at hand when He told His Apostles : '... the prince of this world cometh ; and in Me he hath not anything' (that is, he will find no vulnerable point ; John xiv, 30). Later, in the Acts of the Martyrs, we shall find that the whole contest was not between the confessors and the executioners, but between Christ, who contended in the persons of His faithful, and the devil, who multiplied his efforts to snatch them out of the Redeemer's hand. It is in this wise that the Passion of our Lord is manifested to us from the very first : a duel between Christ and Satan.

<sup>1</sup> On this little estate there was a shelter, and it was there, no doubt, that Jesus left eight of His Apostles ; at this time of the year the nights in Jerusalem are cold and often damp ; and indeed we shall soon see Peter warming himself, because of the cold, in the High Priest's court.

But this time the Lord will not be attacked alone ; the Apostles also will be tempted and for them the trial will have fatal results. Christ had tried to fortify them against this assault, not only urging them to prayer, but also trying to unite them with His own prayer. So He takes with Him three of their number—the three intimates—upon whom, above all, He ought to have been able to count ; if they stood firm, they would sustain or support the rest. And then, in the mortal anguish that was soon to take hold of Him, Jesus did not wish to be alone. He was about to suffer for the whole sinning human race, and so He willed that it should be represented at His side. That race, as thus represented, ought to unite with Him in His prayer ; at least it would hear it, and the three witnesses of the scene, all oppressed with sadness and fatigue as they were, would see and hear enough of it to be able to tell us what our salvation cost the Son of God :

‘ And when He was gone forward a little, He fell flat on the ground : and He prayed that, if it might be, the hour might pass from Him. And He saith : Abba, Father, all things are possible to Thee : remove this chalice from Me : but not what I will, but what Thou wilt. And He cometh and findeth them sleeping. And He saith to Peter : Simon, sleepest thou ? Couldst thou not watch one hour ? Watch ye : and pray that you enter not into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. And going away again, He prayed, saying the same words. And when He returned, He found them again asleep (for their eyes were heavy) : and they knew not what to answer Him. And He cometh the third time and saith to them : Sleep ye now and take your rest. It is enough. The hour is come : behold the Son of Man shall be betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise up : let us go. Behold, he that will betray Me is at hand.’ (Mark xiv, 35-42 ; cp. Matt. xxvi, 39-46 ; Luke xxii, 41-46.)

Here, once more, the two first Synoptics are closely parallel in their accounts ; but S. Luke diverges. He does not distinguish between the three visits that Jesus made to His Apostles ; while on the other hand he relates two incidents of which he is the only witness : the visit of the angel, and the sweat of blood. We shall speak a little later of the

uncertainties of the manuscript tradition, and of our reasons for preserving both elements of the narrative intact.

Another very notable divergence calls for attention here, namely S. John's silence about the agony.

This silence had already been remarked by the ancients—both Christian and pagan—Origen, Julian the Apostate, Theodore of Mopsuestia<sup>1</sup> being examples. From this fact Strauss formed the negative conclusion : ' Every attempt to insert the agony at Gethsemani between chapters xvii and xviii in S. John's narrative is an attack on the moral elevation and even the character, as a man, of Jesus Christ.'<sup>2</sup> As a matter of fact, this omission is not more notable than many others that we have already noticed ; besides, in xii, 24–27, we have the characteristic narrative of S. John ; in following his familiar method, he gives by anticipation the meaning of events already known, upon which there is no need to return.<sup>3</sup>

The story of our Lord's agony is, for believers, an incomparable source of strength, but a stumbling-block certainly for others ; and as early as the second century Celsus used it to attack Christ : ' How can we hold to be a God this man who never fulfilled His promises at all ? When He has been convicted, judged and condemned to punishment, He hides Himself, takes to flight, and allows Himself to be arrested in a shameful manner, and it was by the very men whom He called His disciples that He was betrayed. It is quite out of keeping with His supposed divinity that He should flee, and allow Himself to be dragged along by cords ; still less that He should be abandoned and betrayed by those with whom He lived, who called Him Master, and looked on Him as their Saviour, as an angel and a highly exalted Son of God.'<sup>4</sup> And later on : ' If things had fallen out as He wished, if He had been stricken while obeying His Father's will, it is clear that nothing could have been hard or painful to Him, since He was God and willed it all. Why then these groans and laments, this attempt to avoid the death He dreaded ; why the cry : " If it be possible let this chalice pass from Me " ? '<sup>5</sup>

These attacks of Celsus have been effectively refuted by

<sup>1</sup> Keim, *Geschichte Jesu von Nazara*, III, p. 306, n. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Das Leben Jesu*, p. 553.

<sup>3</sup> So he interprets the Eucharist, chap. vi, and Baptism in chap. iii.

<sup>4</sup> Cp. Origen, *Contra Cels.*, II, 9 (P.G., XI, 808).

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 21 (841).

Origen. He shows that Christ in no sense hid Himself, since He entered the very garden where He knew the traitor would find Him out ; that, if He suffered this sadness, and shrinking overtook Him, it was voluntarily, and for the salvation of our souls ; that His prayer, of which Celsus quotes only the first words, is a prayer of resignation into His Father's hands. All this is very clear to us, but our Christian education must not blind us to the scandal that this part of the Gospel narrative with all its simple sincerity was bound to cause in pagan circles. All the admiration of that hard and heartless world (Rom. i, 31) was reserved for strength, which a man pretended to possess, even if he did not. As Pindar puts it, one only lets the best side of oneself be seen, that is, whatever one possesses of endurance and imperturbable calm ; a heart, or at least a face, of brass. Education on these lines, breathing the spirit of Sparta and the Stoics, had penetrated the whole ancient world ; even S. Augustine, with his great heart, had to excuse himself for having shed a few tears when his mother, Monica, died. In the face of prejudices like these, Christ's agony, so deeply felt and so sincerely described, was bound to appear as a weakness to unbelievers' eyes. Even believers at times have let themselves be drawn by the general opinion, not indeed into denying this sadness, which cannot be eliminated from the Gospel, but at least into excluding from it all sentiment of personal fear.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Thus the Arians, misusing this passage in order to impute fear to our Lord in His Divine nature, have made some of the Fathers less confident than they would otherwise have been. So S. Hilary writes, *In Psalm.*, 138, 25-26 (P.L., IX, 805) : 'And I said : "Perhaps darkness shall cover me." These seem to be the words of a man, since some, by irreligion or ignorance, think that He trembled under the fear of His Passion. But to show clearly that this saying : "Perhaps darkness shall cover Me," means not that His nature trembled, but that the understanding of the wicked wavered in His regard, He immediately adds : "and night shall be My light in My pleasures." How then can He be crushed by darkness, for whom death is light and pleasure ? Thus the Lord found His delights in His Passion : He destroyed the gates of brass, breaking the chains of iron, despoiling all and triumphing over every other power. He redeems that which He had made in His image, and restores it to the joys of paradise.' *De Trinitate*, x, 9 ff. (X, 349) : Hilary attacks those who argue from Christ's sorrow to prove that His Divine nature was inferior to that of His Father ; and refutes them by showing that He had no fear of death, He who had taught His disciples not to be afraid, whose death was voluntary (11), who could fear nothing for His own Body and Soul (12) or any physical pain (13).

S. Ambrose energetically affirms the reality of our Lord's sorrow, and proves against the Apollinarists that it was His soul and not His divinity



As for the Church's own view of the matter, we find this admirably put by S. Thomas (III<sup>a</sup>, Q. xlvii, 6, and ad 4). Our Lord's pains, he tells us, were extreme. 'Pains of the body, since the punishment of crucifixion is the most painful of all ; pains of the soul, motivated by all the sins of all mankind ; the impending punishment of the Jews, and of the executioners ; the scandalization of the Apostles ; and finally the loss of the bodily life, which naturally strikes our human nature with horror.' These pains were all the greater in Him inasmuch as the composition of His sacred Body was more perfect, and the apprehension of sensible suffering therefore more exact. These sufferings were pure and without any alloy of bitterness. Finally, they had been voluntarily chosen by Him, and proportioned to the end He had set before Him, namely the salvation of our souls.

that was thus affected, but at the same time he maintained that Jesus was afflicted not on account of Himself, but of us. Thus *In Luc.* (XV) 1817), he writes : "' Father, if it be possible . . ." Many find a difficulty in this passage, because they connect the Redeemer's sorrow with the nature that was His from eternity rather than with the weakness He took in time, and so they try to twist the sense of this passage. For myself, I see nothing here that requires excuse, but I admire more here than anywhere else the Lord's dignity and devotion ; for He would have brought me less support and consolation if He had not taken my feelings upon Him. So it was for me that He suffered—He who had nothing that could make Him suffer—keeping the bliss of His eternal divinity apart that He might experience the mortification of my weakness. For He has taken my sorrow to give me His joy, and He came down to walk in our footsteps, following them even to death that He might lead us back, in His footsteps, to life. So I dare speak of His sadness, since I mention the cross ; for He was not made incarnate in appearance, but in truth. So He had to take upon Him pain as well so as to conquer, and not to forbid it all approach. For how could we imitate Thee, Lord Jesus, if we did not follow Thee as a man, if we did not believe in Thy death, if we had not seen Thee covered with wounds ? How could the disciples have believed that He had to die if they had not known the sorrow of His agony ? . . . Thou sufferest, then, Lord ; not from Thy wounds but from mine ; not from Thy death but from our weakness ; and we have believed that Thou wast in pains, when Thou didst suffer not for Thee but for me ; for Thou wast stricken with weakness, only for our sins. He was sad ; not Himself, but His soul. It is in no way the Eternal Wisdom that feels sorrow, nor the divine substance, but the soul. He has taken my body, and has not deceived me in being other than He appeared. He appeared sad and He was sad ; but not from His Passion, but from our falling-away. He was sad because He was leaving us orphans. For the rest, the Scriptures show us with what courage He offered Himself to death. Further, we may say with truth that He was sad for His persecutors, whom He saw burdening themselves with a terrible crime of which they would have to pay the penalty later on. And this is why He said : " Remove this chalice " ; not because the Son of God feared death, but because He did not wish to see even the wicked perish.'

This commentary, taken as a whole, is excellent, and we especially note the affirmation of the reality of our Saviour's humanity, and of His sadness, and of the force of His example for ourselves. Still, we see the pains

Such considerations as these throw light on our path, and give us entry into the innermost sanctuary of the sacred mystery with which we are concerned.<sup>1</sup> During the

which S. Ambrose took to eliminate all idea of personal fear on our Lord's part ; the only object of His sadness was the falling-away of His disciples, and the punishment of those who put Him to death.

And we find S. Jerome still more concerned to make the same point. Thus he writes (*In Matt.*, IV ; xxvi, 197) : ' What we have said above about the Passion and what went before it, finds its application still more in this chapter : to establish the reality of the human nature that He had taken, the Lord truly felt sadness, but the Passion did not dominate His soul, for He had begun to feel this sadness before. Besides if He was sad, it was in no sense for fear of suffering—He who had come to suffer and had rebuked Peter for his timidity ; but it was for the unfortunate Judas, for the scandalization of all the Apostles, for His rejection by the Jews, for the destruction of unhappy Jerusalem. And it is His soul that is sorrowful, not because of death, but unto death ; until by His Passion, He had set His Apostles free. Not from fear of suffering, but from pity for His own people, did He ask that He might not drink the chalice that that same people pressed to His lips. And this was why He said precisely not, let *the* chalice pass, but let *this* chalice pass, that is, the chalice of the Jewish people, who had not the excuse of ignorance. Still, recovering Himself, what He had refused as man He confirmed as God, and as the Son of God : " not what I will, but what Thou wilt." '

S. Augustine says little of our Lord's agony ; but (*Enarr. in Ps.*, 93, 19 ; XXXVII, 1208) he affirms the reality of His sorrow, and adds that if it be denied, we must at the same time deny all reality to the human nature of our Lord.

S. Chrysostom (*In Matt.*, hom. 83 ; LVIII, 745-746) shows how our Lord wished to prove the reality of His Incarnation by His sorrow, by His prayer and by His bloody sweat.

We have no intention, by means of these references, of entering into the whole question of patristic exegesis, still less of gloating over the hesitations and repugnances of the ancient Fathers. Our whole purpose is to produce a better realization of the sincerity of the Gospel narrative in its description of the Agony of our Blessed Lord.

<sup>1</sup> Merely as a matter of interest we may recall the efforts made by certain rationalist critics to dispose of our Lord's Agony in the Garden. Heumann, for example, suggested that Jesus had taken a chill in crossing the brook Cedron ; Thiess, that He had been seized with an attack of fever (Strauss, II, 447 ; Keim, III, 304, n. 1). Schleiermacher, without having recourse to this absurd interpretation of the narrative, tries to confound the testimony of the Synoptics by calling in that of John (Weiss, II, 536, n.). Strauss, II, 472, claims to detect disagreement between the two sets of witnesses, and equally challenges both. The whole story, according to him, is nothing more than a mythological figment : it was imagined that Jesus foresaw all the details of His Passion : on that assumption the Synoptics embroidered the scene of the Agony, and John, outdoing them, showed Jesus walking to His doom with a firm step in the face of all. Very few critics to-day would take upon themselves the responsibility of these denials, confronted with this, one of the most manifestly sincere narratives in the whole Gospel. Nevertheless, Loisy sets out to show that the narrative of Mark is artificial : ' Mark relates what Jesus did and said, while the Apostles were asleep, just as he relates further on the discovery of the empty tomb by women who had never in their lives spoken of it ' (562). ' The various elements that go to make up the prayer of Christ are not less identifiable. Into this Mark first introduces the Aramaic word

great discourse and the priestly prayer, Jesus had revealed a calmness of soul which it seemed that no apprehension could disturb, no circumstance affect. And in an instant all was changed. It was as though a dike had suddenly given way, opening a passage for the great waters of tribulation, overflowing and seeming to engulf His soul. He staggered, fell with His face to the ground, and prayed.

The mortal affliction that He suffered then and acknowledged to His Apostles, came, in the first place, from the imminence of His Passion ; He was man, and wished to take upon Him all our infirmities that He might cure them all. Death is a frightening thing for everyone ; God has made it into a punishment for us, and it always keeps this character of a horrible and unnatural ill. When we feel its approach, when its first terrors grip our heart, that is an experience of dire anguish for all who are about to die. Anyone who has been present at a death-bed cannot, surely, recall without emotion this agitation of the whole being that finds itself in the grip of death. And our Blessed Lord wished to undergo this experience, so that to all in their agony His example might be a source of consolation and strength. Nor did His trouble spring only from the fact of death, already weighing upon His spirit, but from the whole series of horrible sufferings through which He had to pass. Garvie, an Anglican, rejects this interpretation as unworthy of Christ : ‘ . . . this is to ascribe to Jesus a weakness from which many men and women have been entirely free, and which has in many other cases been entirely overcome by faith in Him. Is it likely that the Chief of the martyr band would bear Himself less bravely and calmly in the face of death than those who, following in His footsteps, and upheld by His companionship, faced death in many forms of torment with a smile or a song

“ Abba,” father, followed by its Greek translation, in accordance with the usage of the primitive communities, among whom “ Abba ” had become a sort of sacramental term, followed usually by the word “ father ” in the vocative case. Our Lord’s conditional request is repeated in direct speech, which shows its source ; the chalice of His death comes from Paul, as also the Eucharistic Feast ; submission to the will of God is part of the Lord’s Prayer. Peter, James and John need not necessarily have heard these words in Gethsemani for Mark to have been able to write them ’ (564). And then there are touches drawn from the equally artificial narrative of the Transfiguration : ‘ their eyes were heavy, they knew not what to reply ’ (568). All this may be very ingenious, but it has hardly more bearing upon the subject than the hypothesis of our Lord’s taking a chill when crossing the brook Cedron.

upon their lips? To the writer this explanation seems intolerable.<sup>1</sup>

We understand this protest, but we do not subscribe to it. Certainly, the strength and spirit of the martyrs came to them from Christ Himself; and if Jesus had so wished, He, too, would have welcomed death and torment with laughter and song. But He preferred to give the rein to His natural shrinking in face of the Cross, and we ought to thank Him for it; without doubt we admire the joyous zeal of a S. Blandina, as she ran, from one torture to another, the whole length of that continuous thorn-hedge that divided the amphitheatre into two; while whips, iron combs and the red-hot chair reproduced one after another all the torments of hell. In this superhuman joy, in this eagerness to grave upon her body all the wounds she could, in order to present them to Christ, we are lost in reverent admiration at the strength that His athletes receive from Christ; we admire—but we are conscious that this is a gratuitous gift, upon the possession of which our fidelity and our eternal regard in no way depend. Our Lord's own example shows us that God does not condemn our natural agonies, and that the strong courage of a Christian may overcome them, without pretending to ignore them.

This aspect of our Lord's agony has been brought out by Reuss. He can see no other, and that is his weak point, but at least he has expressed himself well: 'There is,' he writes, 'no room for hesitation; the text speaks of a trial undergone by Jesus in the garden of Gethsemani, and Christian sentiment, yielding to the impression naturally produced by a narrative as simple as it is moving, has never had any difficulty in understanding the anguish of this soul, in sympathizing with its painful struggle, and fortifying itself by its triumph. . . . Far from fearing that the Saviour's dignity would suffer, the three narrators, we might say, take a kind of pleasure in painting the state of His soul in the gloomiest colours. They heap up synonyms to describe His state of prostration, calling His agitation an agony, a final and a desperate struggle, so to speak. . . . Nay, we would dare to add that if, in relation to this profound discouragement, we view His repeated exhortations to His disciples, the evangelists do not recoil before the possibility that these same exhortations were addressed also to the very Person

<sup>1</sup> *Expositor* (1907), II, p. 167.

by Whom they were uttered and Who felt the need of them more than anyone else ever could. But, too, with equal simplicity, free from affectation, they are careful to show how, gaining the mastery over these sentiments, Christ recovered His serenity of spirit, that joyous union of His and His Father's wills to which He Himself had pointed as the most authentic seal of His superiority and His mission upon earth. Thus the whole narrative is as edifying as it is intelligible from the religious and psychological points of view. . . . The ideal goal of the Christian is the victory that must be gained over human weakness, with the help of the strength that comes from God ; and thus regarded, this ideal has nowhere been realized more perfectly than in this scene at Gethsemani, which would be the most sublime page of a poem, were it not the divinest event in a history.<sup>1</sup>

Still, all this fails to bring us into touch with the heart of the mystery, to which we can get a little nearer by recalling other Gospel incidents which will help us in its interpretation. First, there is the Temptation, which appears as a struggle markedly similar to the Agony, on the threshold of the public ministry of our Lord. Then Satan attacked the Son of God, making use of images that foreshadowed those with which, in Gethsemani, he would try to overpower His will ; and above all, the prospect of a national Messianism, triumphant and drawing all Israel in its train with a common enthusiasm delirious with joy, and sweeping away every obstacle in its march. From the Mount of temptation Jesus had looked out upon these prospects, had contemplated this dazzling mirage which Satan was urging Him to realize in fact. Such an ideal was not His will, but His whole life suffered from it. He saw the crowds who had so often hailed Him with enthusiasm, in their desire to make Him a king, gradually turning from a vocation too high for them, which they despaired of ever reducing to a standard within their reach. The hosannas of Palm Sunday were still in His ears, and yet He could almost hear the *tolle, tolle, crucifige* rising, hideous, upon the air. It was His condemnation and that of His people too : ' His blood be upon us and upon our children,' was their own cry. So His coming into the world, His works, His miracles, His teachings—all would only end in the condemnation of those whom He loved most in the world. ' If I had not come and spoken

<sup>1</sup> *Histoire Evangélique*, p. 653.

to them, they would not have sin : but now they have no excuse for their sin' (John xv, 22). We are reminded of S. Paul's cry of grief :

' I speak the truth in Christ : I lie not, my conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost : that I have great sadness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I wished myself to be an anathema from Christ, for my brethren : who are my kinsmen according to the flesh : who are Israelites : to whom belongeth the adoption as of children and the glory and the testament and the giving of the law and the service of God and the promises : Whose are the fathers. . . .' (Rom. ix, 1-5.)

And S. Paul's sorrow is nothing compared with that of our Lord, first because his love of his people is infinitely less ardent than the charity of Christ, and then because he had not, like his Master, so poignant a motive of grief ; it was His death, nay, His very sacrifice on their behalf that would do His people harm. S. Paul wished himself anathema ; Christ wished it and was so ; but it was this very immolation of Himself that brought ruin in its train. It was only a few steps from here, on this same Mount of Olives, that Christ, scarcely a few hours since, had looked on Jerusalem through His tears : ' And thou wouldst not.' Jerusalem was not willing, and the time of visitation was past ; the day of the great crime had arrived, and soon that of chastisement would come. And no doubt the Tempter was there as he had been at the mountain after the forty-days' fast, suggesting to Jesus that, if He so willed, His ministry could be nothing but a triumph, and His people would be saved.

Closer to Himself than His people, Jesus saw the little band of His Apostles, and here too sadness reigned ! First, there was Judas. We have been through the story of the Supper, and we remember the anguished predictions of our Lord :

' Amen I say to you, that one of you is about to betray Me. And they being very much troubled began everyone to say : Is it I, Lord ? But He answering said : He that dippeth his hand with Me in the dish, he shall betray Me. The Son of Man indeed goeth, as it is written of Him. But woe to that man by whom the Son of Man

shall be betrayed. It were better for him, if that man had not been born.' (Matt. xxvi, 21-24.)

In these words we feel the presence of all our Lord's horror of the crime, and dismay at its punishment ; and now the hour was come, and almost immediately Judas would be there, infatuated by his infamous design. Satan had entered into him, but Jesus loved him still, and we are conscious of this love vibrating in the words with which his coming is hailed : ' Friend, whereto art thou come ? ' (Matt. xxvi, 50). More than ever, at this moment, He felt the force of this love and it was His torment ; like a mother who sees the ingratitude of her only son, and is rejected and betrayed by him at the very moment that she gives her life on his behalf.

And what of the others whom the Lord had received into the inner circle of His friends ? Even in them He finds nothing but torpor and sloth. Already He is aware of the terrible temptation that is about to swallow them up ; in vain He warns them and urges them to prayer ; they sleep, and soon they will be scattered, and Peter will crown all by his denial. And then He is oppressed by a further grief on their account, knowing the persecutions to which He is leaving them exposed. It was more especially in the last days of His life that these sombre forebodings were present to His mind. We noticed them in the great eschatological discourse (Mark xiii, 9-13) ; and we find them again in the discourse after the supper (John xvi, 1-4 ; 20-22). On these occasions, we are not only conscious of our Lord's anxiety to forewarn His Apostles against the ills that lay across their path ; we recognize, too, His gentle compassion, which saw those whom He tenderly loved exposed in all their weakness to such terrible trials :

' Because I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. The hour cometh that whosoever killeth you will think that he doth God a service. You shall lament and weep, but the world shall rejoice.'

These pictures of the future were already sufficiently frightening ; and yet our Lord could not paint them for the Apostles in all the detail in which He saw them Himself. He had before His eyes persecutions that would end only with the world itself. He saw His Church pass through the world as He Himself would in a few moments be passing

through the streets of Jerusalem ; in the midst of insults, howls, and blows. When He appeared to Saul on the road to Damascus, He would say : ' Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me ? ' The truth is that all the wounds of His faithful were His, too. Not only in figure were they His members and He their Head. In His agony His Blood would effuse over His whole body, and in that act S. Augustine<sup>1</sup> saw a figure of the sufferings of the Church. Truly is she the body of Christ, and truly she is covered with blood. In every country and age she has been stricken in the person of her martyrs, who in their agony called upon their Lord.

For example, we may recall the following touching incident in the acts of S. Agathonice. At the sight of the torments of SS. Papyrus and Carpus she rushed forth, crying in her excess of zeal : ' This feast is made ready for me, too ! ' But if the spirit is willing, the flesh is weak ; and when in her turn the tortures were upon her, she cried out in anguish : ' Lord, Lord, Lord, come to my help ! it is in Thee that I trust ! ' And Christ heard her, calmed her, and gathered her soul to Himself ; but there was none to hear Him, on this awful night. He was alone—or rather, not, for from the whole earth there rose to Him this cry of the saints : ' Lord, Lord, come to our help ! ' And if He could calm their anguish, it was because He had been pierced with it Himself. And then, alas, the martyrs are not the only people in the Church ; there are sinners and apostates, too. In the apostolic college there was only one traitor in twelve ; but in the Church's vast expanse of space and time, how many there have been ! S. Paul could cry : ' Who is weak, and I am not weak ? Who is scandalized, and I am not on fire ? ' (2 Cor. xi, 29).

But once again, what comparison was there between him and Christ ? Doubtless he felt the miseries and the falls of those whose spiritual father he was ; but they were not his members, and when they severed themselves from him they did not, so to speak, take with them his very life. But Christ felt all the pain of this broken union. As to His Apostles, so to all the afflicted He repeats His words : ' Abide in Me.' But they will not listen ; rather, they cast themselves off from Him ; branches barren and dead, fit for nothing but the fire.

Seeing the inconstancy of his Galatians, S. Paul told them :

<sup>2</sup> In *Psalm.*, 140, 4 (P.L., XXXVII, 1817).



‘ . . . then Christ died in vain ’ (Gal. ii, 21). Surely this mournful cry penetrated on that last night to the very heart of our Divine Lord ! Was He not about to die in vain, or rather would not His Passion be for many men, as for Jerusalem and the Jewish nation, the cause of a heavier responsibility and a severer condemnation than would otherwise have been theirs ? ‘ If I had not come, they would not have sin : but now they have no excuse for their sin.’ Yet in all this we do not touch as yet what was most bitter and most profound in these torments of our Lord. For this we must penetrate to that union of the Son with the Father, which was the most intimate characteristic of the Son of God.

In seeking to penetrate this great mystery, we have as aids not only the Gospels, but also S. Paul in the Epistle to the Hebrews. After reminding his readers that in Jesus Christ we have a High Priest who can feel with us in our weakness, he goes on :

‘ For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in the things that appertain to God, that he may offer up gifts and sacrifices for sins : Who can have compassion on them that are ignorant and that err : because he himself also is compassed with infirmity. And therefore he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins. Neither doth any man take the honour to himself, but he that is called by God, as Aaron was. So Christ also did not glorify Himself, that He might be made a high priest : but He that said unto Him : Thou art My Son : this day have I begotten Thee. As he saith also in another place : Thou art a priest for ever, according to the order of Melchisedech. Who in the days of his flesh, with a strong cry and tears, offering up prayers and supplications to Him that was able to save him from death, was heard for his reverence. And whereas indeed He was the Son of God, He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. And being consummated, He became to all that obey Him, the cause of eternal salvation : called by God a high priest, according to the order of Melchisedech.’ (Heb. v, 1-10.)

And immediately the Apostle adds : ‘ Of whom we have much to say and hard to be intelligibly uttered.’ It is not

for us, then, to presume to exhaust the subject, but we can at least consider it and learn from it to understand better our Saviour's agony and prayer. Nor is this an isolated passage in Hebrews, for in chapter ii, 9, 10, we read :

‘ . . . who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour : that through the grace of God He might taste death for all. For it became Him for whom are all things and by whom are all things, who had brought many children into glory, to perfect the author of their salvation, by His Passion.’

And again in 17, 18 :

‘ Wherefore it behoved Him in all things to be made like unto His brethren, that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest before God, that He might be a propitiation for the sins of the people. For in that wherein He Himself hath suffered and been tempted He is able to succour them also that are tempted.’

From all these passages, Almighty God wishes us to learn the part that suffering had to play in the life of Christ. We know well enough that we are trained and formed by suffering, but it is Jesus Himself whom we here see put to this school and perfected in this hard apprenticeship. Yet it is certain that He is God's Son and in this very passage the sacred author reminds us of the fact. It follows that through His Divine nature He is infinitely perfect, and that suffering can bring Him no perfection that He lacks, nor reveal to Him anything that He does not know. But what it does bring Him is a human experience, and that a painful one, destined to form Him in His rôle of Head and High Priest of the human race. For if He had become incarnate in a humanity that had known neither fall nor punishment, He would not have had to learn this hard lesson of trial, to which we His brethren would never have had to submit. But the humanity of which He is head is just this guilty and suffering humanity in which ‘ all heads droop and all hearts are broken.’ If He was truly our brother, to be the model by which we are taught, consoled, and inspired, our Lord could never have passed through the world impassible and with a smile on His face. He had to take His part in our ills, and at this price, ‘ having Himself suffered and been tempted He is

able to succour also them that are tempted,' 'who can have compassion on them that are ignorant and err : because He Himself also is compassed with infirmity.'

Such considerations, profound and moving as they are, are full of comfort for every Christian soul. Whoever loves Christ cannot contemplate His Passion without being stirred by emotion of a painful kind, an emotion all the keener because each one of us bears his measure of responsibility for this overwhelming catastrophe ; it was for our sins that He was bruised. But the thought that can most effectively console us in this grief is that these sufferings were, for Christ Himself, the instrument of His greatness, or of His perfection, to use the word employed by the inspired author himself.

And this great idea of the Head of the human race, formed and perfected by suffering, is seen still more fully in the conception of the priesthood of our Lord. This priesthood, as the Apostle tells us, is a glory that Christ did not take upon Himself ; having received it from Him who said : 'Thou art a priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedech.' It is a glory, but it is a heavy burden, too ; for it is the Divine Will that the priest who intercedes for the faults of all should share the responsibilities and the infirmities of all. Other priests, drawn from the ranks of sinful humanity, feel themselves to be weak and sinful : before God they will be humble, and indulgent in dealing with their fellow-men. And in accepting this burden of the priesthood, the Son of God by no means repudiated this common law : 'He, too, willed to be compassed with infirmity,' and it was thus that He appeared in the garden : He, with a strong cry and tears offered up prayers and supplications : He was bruised by our sufferings and bore the weight of our sins. It was this that gave to His prayer that tone of humility, we might say better, of confusion, which was so new to Him and eloquent of so poignant a grief, when it is remembered that He who prayed thus was none other than the Son of God Himself.

This prayer has been recorded in almost identical terms by the three Synoptics, which is the more remarkable inasmuch as, in the Passion narrative, Luke usually takes a more independent line. We may well believe that the three Apostles heard this prayer that our Lord, as they observe (Mark xiv, 39), repeated several times : 'Abba,

Father, all things are possible to Thee : remove this chalice from Me ; but not what I will, but what Thou wilt' (Mark xiv, 36).

It all brings back to us the memory of the prayer that Jesus had taught His disciples many months before. We have already said, in commenting on the *Our Father*, that it was probably on this same Mount of Olives that the Apostles learnt the Lord's prayer from our Redeemer's lips ; and in this great crisis of His Passion, it comes out at every point of the Gospel text. It represents all that belongs to the innermost citadel of our Saviour's human soul ; it embodies the revelation that He makes to us under the pressure of grief and pain. We have already noticed this when comparing the Lord's Prayer with the priestly prayer of Christ ;<sup>1</sup> and it stands out still more clearly in the story of the agony. ' . . . Pray,' He told His Apostles, ' that you enter not into temptation.' Surely we have here an echo of His own prayer : ' Lead us not into temptation.' And, above all, in the oft-repeated words : ' not what I will, but what Thou wilt,' we find the very petition : *Pater, fiat voluntas tua*, that we ourselves have learned to repeat. But when He taught us to say that, He was full of joyful satisfaction in His Father's will (Luke x, 21). Now, once more, He repeated the words when, for the first time, His will experienced a dreadful repugnance for the chalice that His Father puts to His lips. Later on, theologians would gain much light from this passage, which would enable them to distinguish with certainty the two wills belonging respectively to our Lord's two natures, human and Divine. It is one more factor in the process by which He manifests to us the truth of His Incarnation : truly, He has taken our nature, except our sin. In this connection Maldonatus remarks : ' Christ in this passage spoke as if He were a man to whom the Divine will was imperfectly known, and as one who had not sufficient strength to overcome death.' Thus He made clear to us the repugnance of His human will, but at the same time He taught us by His example to submit to the Divine will, the supreme rule to which that human will of His was infallibly attached : *quae placita sunt ei, facio semper*.

Surely we see Him here as He is put before us by S. Paul, clothed with weakness and therefore able to be indulgent to those who are ignorant and have gone astray. And this

<sup>1</sup> Chase, *The Lord's Prayer*, p. 111.

very weakness makes more winning the lesson that He has to teach: 'Abba, Father. All things are possible to Thee.' It is His first word, at this very hour when He could see Judas coming with his band of armed men. He knew that God could do everything, and that His intervention at any moment would be all-powerful, rescuing them all, and effectively thwarting Judas or Caiphas or Pilate or the executioners of Calvary. And if He did not wish to interfere, let His will be done; that was all that mattered; Christ's own will did not count at all.

And at that moment, as S. Luke tells us, there came to comfort Him an angel from heaven—once more reminding us of the Temptation in the wilderness. Then, too, the angels came, but to minister to Him, for the struggle was at an end, and Jesus had triumphed over Satan. But now the agony was to become more terrible, for it was after the angel's visit that we find mentioned the sweat of blood. Both these incidents have appeared to many readers in so surprising a light that many manuscripts of S. Luke omit them altogether. However, they are mentioned in S. Justin and S. Irenæus;<sup>1</sup> and we can well understand that a mistaken reverence might have caused their omission, since their insertion in this narrative could not be easily explained. We are reminded of the words in Hebrews: 'Thou hast made Him (by His Incarnation) a little lower than the angels,' and we are not surprised that it should have been by an angel that this human nature, crushed by such devastating sorrow, should have been sustained. As for the sweat of blood, other examples can be quoted of this, and we can understand without difficulty that the Apostles, who saw our Lord return to them three times during that night, should have been struck by it, and should have kept its memory in their hearts.<sup>2</sup>

But what we feel to be most precious in this episode is

<sup>1</sup> Justin, *Dial.*, 103, 8 (P.G., VI, 717c). Irenæus, *Adv. Haer.*, III, 22, 2 (P.G., VII, 957a). Cp. Epiphanius, *Ancoratus*, XXXI, 4 ff. (P.G., XLIII, 73a).

<sup>2</sup> On the sweat of blood, cp. Suarez in III, ix, 46, a. 8, *Disput.* xxxiv, 2 (ed. Paris, XIX, 542-5). Jesus really sweated blood, and this sweat was not miraculous, but natural. It was the result of His utter exhaustion of body and agony of soul. '*Licet Christus naturali affectu timeret, tamen deliberata voluntate et efficaci, et actu appetitus a voluntate imperato, mortem et omnes dolores, qui efficacissime proponebantur, amplectebatur, et naturalem affectum superabat, et hinc agonia proveniebat. Ex hoc ergo actu fortitudinis et audaciæ, magis quam ex timore et tristitia, illa corporis alteratio et sanguinis emissio provenire potuit.*'

the fact that the bloody sweat was only a symbol of the agony that was taking place in our Blessed Lord's soul. To fully understand this mystery we must understand the nature of sin, and God Himself, and the union between the Father and the Son. True, all this is infinitely beyond us ; still we must speak of it, and what little we can understand of it will be precious indeed.

The first thing to be observed is the distinction just made between our Lord's human will and the Divine will of His Father in heaven. 'Not what I will, but what Thou wilt.' Here is a note that we have not encountered anywhere in the Gospel before. Up to then, Jesus, living in intimate relationship with His Father and entirely dependent upon His life, had no will other than that of the Father Himself. 'My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me.' That was His strength, His joy and His life, and with His eyes fixed upon this will that He knew and loved so well, He went on with His work in the world. Men might press Him to do miracles, to reveal or hide Himself : all these human suggestions are a matter of indifference for Him : it is from His Father alone that He awaits both direction and motive force : 'I do always the things that please Him.' Why then this divergence that we have before us now ? 'Not what I will, but what Thou wilt.' Certainly, there is no question of any resistance to the Father's will, for this very prayer breathes the spirit of entire submission ; but this holy and beloved will did not allow itself to be felt ; the sensible contact hitherto experienced by Him had been lost, His Father was far from Him—had, in fact, forsaken Him, as He would complain presently upon the Cross ; whence the prayer, the tone of which Maldonatus has so well interpreted, in a passage quoted above : 'Jesus speaks as if He were a man to whom the Divine will were imperfectly known, and who had not the strength to support the crisis of death.' The fact is beyond dispute, and we take it direct from the Gospel itself ; but to appreciate its significance is another thing. As we remarked above, our Lord's life entirely depended on that of His Father. From earth He derived no consolation, joy, or support ; all came to Him from above ; and now the heavens are closed, and solitude and desolation have taken the place of a conscious union that had filled His human heart with a beatitude of which we can form no idea.

The first impression is that of one who has lost all the bearings of his life ; it is like a nocturnal vertigo. Hence the dismay and anguish of the prayer : ‘ If it be possible, let this chalice pass from Me. Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt.’

And what lent such infinite cruelty to this agony was the weight of sin, the crushing burden of which was laid upon our Lord.

If He is thus separated from His Father, so as to be scarcely able any longer to recognize that will which, up to then, had been His sustenance and His very life, it is because now, between Him and His Father, there is an obstacle impeding all outpouring of soul on His part, and all consolation on the part of God : and that obstacle is our sin. This was the burden of *Isaias’* prophecy : ‘ Surely He hath borne our infirmities and carried our sorrows : and we have thought of Him as it were a leper, and as one struck by God and afflicted. But He was wounded for our iniquities : He was bruised for our sins. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him : and by His bruises we are healed.’ And, even more forcibly, *S. Paul* expresses the same thought. ‘ Him, who knew no sin, He hath made sin for us : that we might be made the justice of God in Him’ (2 Cor. v, 21) ; and, again : ‘ Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, for it is written : Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree. That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Christ Jesus : that we may receive the promise of the Spirit by faith’ (Gal. iii, 13-14). The precise meaning of these passages has been very accurately rendered by *Fr. Prat* : ‘ Properly speaking, there is no substitution of persons, but rather solidarity of action. Sin is not transferred from men to Christ, but it is extended to Him as representative of the human race. In the same way God’s justice is not transferred from Christ to men, but extended from Christ to them, when they are clothed with Divine nature by the adoption of sons. . . . As Head of the human race, of which He represents the cause and identifies Himself with the interests, Jesus Christ personifies sin : He is made “ sin for us,” not in our place, but on our behalf, since by making Himself sharer of our lot, He associates Himself with our destiny as well. Thus having become sin for us, He makes us just with God’s justice in Himself.’ And he adds a little

further on : ' In our order of providence where redemption comes about by virtue of the principle of solidarity, Christ had to become man to ransom men, to become subject to the Law to deliver His own subjects from the Law, to become a member of a sinful family that He might save sinners, to be clothed with flesh that He might subdue the flesh in His own person, to be closely linked with the guilty that His justice might reflect itself upon them ; in a word, to be subject to all our infirmities and miseries, that He might be the ideal pontiff capable of opening to us the gate of heaven.'<sup>1</sup>

I have quoted this passage at some little length in order to refute the false interpretations that have arisen in a matter delicate in itself and much discussed ; and more especially the blasphemies of the early so-called Reformers. In their view Christ, in His Passion, suffered the torments of the damned, the consciousness of rejection by God, and even despair itself. This was the teaching of Calvin,<sup>2</sup> and also of Lutherans like Quenstedt : ' Christ,' he says, ' was subject to eternal death, but not for ever. This death, and the torments of hell, He experienced, not after but before His physical death, both in the Garden of Olives and on the cross.'<sup>3</sup>

And, as always, blasphemous exaggerations such as these have provoked unbalanced reaction in the ranks of Protestantism itself. The liberal Protestantism of later years would see in the Redemption nothing but a moving example of devotion and love, which is the thesis specially developed by Sabatier in his book *La Doctrine de l'Expiation et son évolution historique*. Thus on page 69 we read : ' In the work of saving sinners Christ had no need to exert any influence upon God, whose own love had appropriated and retained the initiative of pardon. Almighty God had no need of being brought into touch with man, or of being reconciled to him ; it was man who needed to be brought back to God. Yet the task of accomplishing this was no less necessary or immense. Since the forgiveness of sins can only be brought about by the repentance and return to

<sup>1</sup> *Théologie de saint Paul*, II, 295-9.

<sup>2</sup> *In harm. ev.* (Matt. xxvi, 37, quoted by Strauss, II, 446) : ' Non mortem horruit simpliciter, quatenus transitus est e mundo, sed quia formidabile Dei tribunal illi erat ante oculos, iudex ipse incomprehensibili vindicta armatus, peccata vero nostra, quorum onus illi erat impositum, sua ingenti mole eum premebant.'

<sup>3</sup> Quoted by Sabatier, *La Doctrine de l'Expiation et son évolution historique* (1902), p. 46.



God of those separated from Him by sin, Christ's work will be to induce in the individual, and the race at large, that state of repentance in which alone the Father's forgiveness will take effect. . . . So do the Passion and Death of Christ act on the sinner's soul. This is the most powerful call to repentance that humanity has ever heard, and the most efficacious as well, the most fertile, too, in wonderful results. The Cross is only an atonement for sin in the sense that it is the cause of that repentance to which the promise of forgiveness has been attached. . . . Once the drama of Calvary is thus restored to its true nature, it becomes what it was before, an historic human drama, the greatest and most tragic that history has ever seen. All the magic of sacerdotal ritual, all juridical fiction has vanished ; and we find ourselves in the realities of the moral world.' There is no need of a long discussion to show that the whole mystery of the Redemption disappears in any theory such as this. With the ' magic of sacerdotal ritual ' goes the Epistle to the Hebrews ; and with ' the juridical fiction ' the theology of the epistles to the Corinthians and Galatians as well. Of the great and fertile dogma of the Atonement, of the solidarity of the human race, nothing remains. No longer is Christ the Head of humanity ; if He has suffered, it is no longer as one with the guilty race of men ; if He saves us, it is no longer as members vivified by Him. All is broken and dissolved in individualism. Jesus is no longer anything more than an example to us, on which our life no longer depends, but after which, by its own efforts, it ought to form itself. In short, every distinct element of this drama of Gethsemani has been effaced, leaving nothing but the anguish of an unfortunate man who sees the failure of his work, and is conscious of approaching death.

If we wish to flee from this sterile rationalism, and re-enter the great current of Christian tradition, let us read again those passages from S. Paul which we quoted only just now : ' Him, who knew no sin, He hath made sin for us : that we might be made the justice of God in Him.' ' Christ hath redeemed us from the curse . . . being made a curse for us.'

We may recall here one of the most striking passages of the Old Testament. Isaias is relating his vision of the Divine majesty, when suddenly he exclaims : ' Woe is me, because I have held my peace : because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people that hath unclean lips,

and I have seen with my eyes the King, the Lord of Hosts' (vi, 5). We have here just a faint picture of what the Son of God felt in that night of agony. Of the all-powerful and infinitely holy God He had a vision, to which that of Isaias could not be compared ; but at the same time He felt the shame of sin far more than Isaias ever could. All the time He had suffered from this contact, and He had exclaimed with indignation and grief : ' O unbelieving and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you ? How long shall I suffer you ? ' (Matt. xvii, 17). But if this contact was a painful experience, at least Jesus Himself was not merged in that perverse mass. To men He said : ' You being evil,' but of Himself : ' Which of you shall convince Me of sin ? ' But now He no longer speaks in this way. Personally, He is free from sin and remains so to the end ; He is the green wood, while the others are the dry. But all the same He had become identified with the sins of all, and He bore their shame. With equal truth and equal confusion He could say with Isaias : ' I dwell in the midst of a people that hath unclean lips, and I have seen with My eyes the king, the Lord of Hosts.'

And it must be added that He saw the sins He was bearing more clearly than any other man would ever do : ' He knew what was in man ' ; and He penetrated to those innermost recesses which we dare not bring into the light of day. For the sinner who repents, He is always ready with treasures of mercy ; for the Magdalen, the woman taken in adultery, the Prodigal Son. But if He was always ready to forgive, it is not because He was under any illusion as to the gravity of sin or the sacred character of the laws of God. It was because He knew that He Himself would pay our debts, satisfy the justice of His Father, and leave the path to mercy open. Now the hour to make this satisfaction is come, and the awful burden of it weighs upon His soul.

None the less He rose and went back to the three Apostles once more (Matt. xxvi, 40-46 ; Mark xiv, 37-42 ; Luke xxii, 45, 46).<sup>1</sup>

In doing this Jesus was quite aware how little He would find there to sustain Him in His trial. His repeated warnings

<sup>1</sup> Once again Luke's narrative is different from that of the other two Synoptics, since he mentions only one visit and one exhortation of our Lord, while in Matthew and Mark He is seen coming three times to try to rouse the Apostles from their sleep. ' Knabenbauer has well observed that people overwhelmed with sorrow can never remain in one place. At

to His disciples during the supper, and His prophecy of their desertion of Him, showed that He was under no illusion upon the point. But He went to them, simply and humbly, like a man suffering and in need of support. Besides, He wanted to show them something of His agony, and to awaken within them that devotion, dulled by weariness, which was their chief strength. Above all, He wanted to unite them with His own sufferings. In this mortal anguish that the Son of Man suffered for all mankind, it was only fitting that He should not be alone, and that erring humanity should be associated with Him at least in the persons of some of His Apostles—a terrible trial, no doubt, but also an incomparable grace which Christ willed to offer to His favoured ones, but which, devoid of understanding, they let fall from their grasp. Only in the last stage of His torment would Jesus see S. John, at least, taking the place that should have been occupied by all—at the foot of the Cross.

Finding them thus asleep our Lord turns specially to S. Peter, who had protested his fidelity more than all the rest. ‘Although all shall be scandalized in thee, yet not I.’ And yet he had not been able to watch for even one hour. Very gentle is our Lord’s reproach. He calls him ‘Simon’—a name not applied to Peter by S. Mark since his call to the apostolate (iii, 16). It is as though on this evening Jesus found him as he actually was, before his call. Soon and for always he will be Peter the Rock, and that unshakable stability had been promised him from the beginning ; but of this great gift he had little more than the pledge as yet. For the present, all that could be said was that the heavenly graces by which he was enlightened and consoled were an earnest of what he was to become ; and then through his great weakness he falls back for a time into being his old self.

But Jesus does not speak only to him, but to all three : ‘Watch ye : and pray that ye enter not into temptation.’ This torpor and gloom that is weighing upon them is as yet only the beginning of temptation. It is the early fall

one time Jesus is praying, at another He seeks a little comfort among His three dearest disciples. That is the most natural explanation of this thrice-repeated incident that appeared artificial in Loisy’s eyes. The disciples had, no doubt, made an effort to rouse themselves at their Master’s command, and they had been able to understand His first words : but they had fallen asleep again’ (Lagrange, *S. Marc*, p. 389).

of the night around their souls, destined soon to have them completely in its grip. So let them pray while their Master is still with them, and while their souls, though heavy, are not yet completely overwhelmed. 'The spirit . . . is willing, but the flesh weak.' Words which were a warning indeed but at the same time an indulgent excuse by which, at the outset, He lets His poor Apostles know that He does not for a moment question the sincerity of their affection, but the weakness of their will.

Luke notes that their prostration was the direct result of grief. For eight hours they had been living in a state of over-excitement and anguish of soul. And all this had been intensified by the events of the last hour or two—the supper, and the discourse of our Lord. And now the reaction has set in. They are conscious of the imminent danger, without having the courage to face a crisis so often foretold, but upon which they had constantly refused to dwell. They see even the Master Himself gripped by a fear and anguish even unto death. Up to then His power and also His serenity of mind had been their chief support ; now this had suddenly failed them, and dizzy with terror and grief they began to fail.

Against this truly terrible temptation our Lord had warned them many times ; but they had not listened. They were so sure of themselves and of Him. And still with the greatest earnestness He urged them to fortify themselves by prayer. But among them as yet He found no adequate support. With minds confused, they knew not what to reply, and let themselves once more be overcome by sleep. And so three times the Lord came to them ; and at the third He bade them : 'Sleep ye now and take your rest.'<sup>1</sup> But their sleep was interrupted almost at once. The traitor was at hand and Jesus gave the signal to arise : 'It is enough.

<sup>1</sup> In interpreting these words we follow S. Augustine (P.L., XXXIV, 1163) : 'Why does one read above : "Sleep ye now, and take your rest," when the text immediately goes on : "Behold, the hour is come," and He says accordingly : "Rise up, let us go?" Some, on reading this, are puzzled by the apparent lack of harmony between the two commands, and suggest that the words "Sleep ye now, and take your rest" were meant as a reproach, and not as a permission. This would be reasonable, if such an interpretation were necessary. But since Mark, in recalling the same episode, follows "Sleep ye now, and take your rest" with "It is enough : the hour is come : behold the Son of Man shall be betrayed into the hands of sinners," we may assume that after the words *Dormite iam et requiescite*, our Lord was silent for a time, while they slept as He had permitted.'

The hour is come : behold, the Son of Man shall be betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise up : let us go. Behold, he that will betray Me is at hand' (Mark xiv, 41-42).

## II. *The Arrest.*<sup>1</sup>

Our Blessed Lord's arrest has been described in detail by the four evangelists, the exegetes discovering slight differences in their accounts.<sup>2</sup> These slight differences of stress and detail are of great value to the historian, as implying that different sources of information have been brought into use.

In all four Gospels one figure—that of Judas—appears in the front of the stage. It was he who conceived and put into execution the whole plan. In every step that he took we are conscious of a profound perversity already hardened beyond hope of change ; and we admire all the more the restraint shown by the evangelists in their accounts. All expressions of indignation with regard to the traitor are suppressed ; while to mark the hatefulness of his crime

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxvi, 47-56 ; Mark xiv, 43-52 ; Luke xxii, 47-53 ; John xviii, 1-11.

<sup>2</sup> A single reading is enough to reveal the differences between the three accounts. As usual, there is a close correspondence between Matthew's and Mark's account ; still, it is to be once more noted that Matthew insists on the fulfilment of the prophecies (54), whereas Mark puts in several short and concrete details : for instance, the traitor's recommendation to ' Lay hold on Him ! ' and, especially, the incident of the young man.

Luke, as throughout his narrative of the Passion, is quite independent ; neglecting the agreement between Judas and the others as to the sign (the kiss), but, by way of compensation, showing us the disciples asking : ' Master, shall we strike ? ' Also he gives a more energetic account of our Lord's complaint against the brutality of His arrest ; and especially, the concluding words : ' But this is your hour, and the power of darkness,' are peculiar to his narrative. As far as John is concerned, we have already drawn attention to the most notable difference : he omits the Agony, and immediately after our Lord's arrival in the Garden, he relates the coming of the traitor. This account agrees well enough with that of the Synoptics, but the colour of the narrative is different. In this very first episode one notices the same features that characterize his narrative of the Passion (Westcott, 249) : he is careful all along to throw into especial relief the voluntary nature of our Lord's suffering (xviii, 4, 8, 11, 36 ; xix, 28, 30), the fulfilment of the Divine Plan in these sufferings (xviii, 4, 9, 11 ; xix, 11, 24, 28), and the majesty revealed therein (xviii, 6, 20, 37 ; xix, 11, 26, 36). The Synoptics themselves undoubtedly stress these features, too : the fulfilment of the Divine Plan is strongly brought out in Matthew and Mark ; the power of Jesus exemplified by Malchus' cure in Luke ; in all of them, the voluntary character of His sacrifice, forbidding any resistance and leading him to give Himself up to His enemies. These points were not indeed originated by John, but he emphasizes them more than the others.

they content themselves with calling him 'Judas, one of the twelve.' But this discreet reference is omitted by John, who simply refers to him as : 'Judas . . . who betrayed Him.'

Behind the traitor came 'a great multitude with swords and staves,<sup>1</sup> from the chief priests and the scribes and the ancients' (Mark xiv, 43). Thus the three groups composing the Sanhedrin were acting in concert in this assault, the leaders coming themselves, moved by the desire personally to conduct this police operation to which so much importance was attached by them.<sup>2</sup> They had obtained from the Roman governor a detachment of soldiers,<sup>3</sup> but this small company made no direct intervention, having no other mission than to support the Jewish police officers in case of need. There is no doubt that our Lord's enemies feared Him and His followers, as is proved by every step they took. The Romans were there to furnish the assistance of brute force, but it was the Jewish satellites who were charged with the capture of Jesus, and since they met with no resistance, they acted alone. They came 'with swords and clubs'; no doubt it was the season of the full moon; but its uncertain radiance would not perhaps have been sufficient to guide the Jews in the undergrowth of olives and into the depths of

<sup>1</sup> On these retainers and their staves, cp. the satirical song quoted by us *supra*, vol. I, p. 56, and recalled here by Klausner (p. 337).

<sup>2</sup> ' . . . Jesus said to the chief priests and magistrates of the Temple and the ancients that were come unto Him . . . ' (Luke xxii, 52).

<sup>3</sup> John xviii, 3. Reuss, like all S. John's commentators, justly raises this point (*John*, p. 315) : 'Clearly the author distinguishes two different contingents : the officers of the Sanhedrin, and the Roman soldiers'; but he sees here a mistake on the part of the evangelist. Cp. *Histoire Evangélique*, p. 657. Fr. Ollivier (*Passion*, p. 88), with all due respect to John's narrative, tries to explain it in the same way. 'It was a veritable mob, made up, according to the mistaken account of the Synoptics, half of the ordinary guard of the Temple in the pay of the High Priest, and half of burly retainers, hired by the Sanhedrin. In this matter of the betrayal, it seems, the evangelist wished entirely to exonerate from blame the Roman cohort quartered in the Antonia and the palace of the chief town; as if he feared to cast a slur on military honour,—that one surviving virtue of a dying social organism. It is astounding that most modern historians should go wrong here, when Catherine Emmerich, an unlettered woman, needed nothing more than her good sense to perceive the truth—clear enough withal—in the Gospel narrative.' We will put aside the authority of Catherine Emmerich, and as for the respect for military honour, we think it need not worry us in this question of exegesis, since even if the Roman cohort took no part in the arrest of Jesus, yet in the Passion it played sufficiently odious a part, and that incontestably : scourging and crowning with thorns. Let us return to the unadorned text of John.

the hiding-places where Jesus might have remained concealed.

To make things still more secure, Judas had agreed with his party on a sign by which he should make clear to them which of the company was our Blessed Lord. This was to be a kiss, the mark of affection and respect which a disciple would give to his Master when they met. Jesus at once reacted to this bitter blow, and made the traitor feel the baseness of it, too.<sup>1</sup>

It has been asked why the officers of the Sanhedrin needed a sign by which to recognize Christ, whom they had so often seen. Perhaps at night they were less sure of themselves, and no doubt they feared some ruse by which our Lord would escape or by which one of His disciples would take His place.

What, perhaps, is still more odious on Judas' part is his advice to the band of captors : ' Lay hold on Him and lead Him away carefully.' So many times had he seen his Master escape from pursuit and pass through the midst of His enemies, that he was afraid lest this time, too, He should slip through their hands. So, paid as he was for this very end, he was determined to see that the arrest was effective, and that his prisoner was safely delivered into the Sanhedrin's power.

And now the band had crossed the valley of the Cedron and were advancing through the orchards in the moonlight and the torches' glare. When, suddenly they saw rising before them Jesus Himself, who had left His apostles and was walking straight towards His implacable foes. And Judas, detaching himself from the rest, went to meet Him, with the kiss, and the greeting ' Rabbi.'

Before such hypocrisy our Lord shuddered : ' Friend, whereto art thou come ? ' (Matthew). ' Judas, dost thou betray the Son of Man with a kiss ? ' (Luke). The former of the two replies sounds less tender in the original than it does in our own tongue ; *ἐταίρε* was the very word used by the king in speaking to the man without a wedding garment at the marriage feast (Matt. xxii, 12).<sup>2</sup> To this

<sup>1</sup> This poignant incident of the kiss is missing in John—an evangelist who is accused of overdrawing the character of Judas.

<sup>2</sup> ' The word here translated by " friend "—since the French language does not supply us with a better—must not be taken as uttered in an affectionate sense. It is the greeting addressed, in casual encounter, to someone unknown, and at this moment was a sign rather of interior estrangement than of anything else ' (Reuss, *in hoc loco*).

severe admonition Luke tells us that our Lord added a question full of emphasis, and moving in the extreme. The name of the Apostle must have recalled many a similar appeal in the past ;<sup>1</sup> this very title of Son of Man, so many of our Lord's teachings, on His Messianic rôle, His Passion, His resurrection, and His glorification ; and above all the concluding phrase : ' with a kiss. . . ' We recognize here our Lord's character as described so well by de Grandmaison : ' In an ordeal unlimited in its severity, Jesus remained equally removed from all boastfulness on the one hand, or weakness on the other. Here was no touch of stoicism, no defiance, no attitude of studied composure. He did not deny or minimize the evil. But without the least weakening of His will, wholly surrendered and fixed on that of His Father, the sensitive part of His nature was stirred to the depths, trembled, uttered sounds pure, tender, heart-rending, as the case may be.'<sup>2</sup>

This last effort was wasted on Judas, as all previous ones had been ; and waving the wretched man aside, Jesus walked straight up to His foes. ' Whom seek ye ? ' He asked. He wished to make clear the voluntary character of His death, and at the same time to cover His disciples' flight. But the armed men to whom He thus presented Himself had not anticipated the spontaneous approach of One whose capture they had expected to be difficult ; and so they simply repeated the name ' Jesus of Nazareth ' which had been given them in the instructions they had received. ' I am He,' was our Lord's reply. Several times before, on other solemn occasions, had He spoken these same simple words : to the Samaritan woman (John iv, 26) ; to the terrified Apostles on the lake (vi, 20) ; to the Jews at the Feast of Tabernacles (viii, 24, 28) ; and when foretelling Judas' treachery to the Apostles in the Upper Room (xiii, 19). For Judas, at least, they must have been full of meaning and memory. The officers, too, were vividly impressed by the scene. They saw their guide brought in confusion to a halt, and Him whom they were seeking coming towards them as if He was their Master. Perhaps they were asking themselves if this Messiah, this Wonder-worker, was not going to strike them with lightning, as Elias had done with

<sup>1</sup> We may compare similar questions addressed to Martha (Luke x, 41), Philip (John xiv, 9) and Simon (Mark xiv, 37).

<sup>2</sup> *Jesus Christ*, II, p. 118.



the fifty men sent to take him captive, many centuries before. They drew back and fell to the ground. So Christ persisted in showing the voluntary nature of His sacrifice—but, as with the manifestation of His power recorded in the Gospels, more in warning than in punishment—with mercy and restraint.

And our Lord's enemies, surprised but not converted, regained their self-control ; and as He advanced again, a similar dialogue took place. ' Whom seek ye ?—Jesus of Nazareth—I have told you that I am He. If therefore you seek Me, let these go their way.'

Here we recognize the Good Shepherd once again. The hireling, wholly regardless of his flock, flies at the wolf's approach, and the sheep are carried off and torn to pieces, but the Good Shepherd gives His life for the sheep. ' Of them whom Thou hast given Me I have not lost any one.' In thus defending them, not only did our Lord spare them the outrage and the brutalities of arrest, but above all He preserved them from a temptation that would have been too great for their strength. As Jesus had foretold, only one would succumb to this terrible trial—the son of perdition, given up to Satan, to whom he had given up his Master in his turn.

But even yet the Apostles did not feel their weakness, and seeing how things were going they asked Him : ' Lord, shall we strike with the sword ? ' And then without waiting for a reply, Peter, drawing his sword, struck Malchus, wounding him in the ear.<sup>1</sup>

But this hasty action drew upon him a well-merited reproof : ' Put up again thy sword into its place : for all that take the sword shall perish with the sword ' (Matt.).

<sup>1</sup> The name of the Apostle and of the servant have come down to us only through John ; writers who deny to the Fourth Gospel any real historical value regard these features as of no more than legendary worth. Thus Goguel, *Les sources du récit johannique de la Passion*, 77, writes : ' The redactor might easily have introduced the name Malchus as a touch of realism. The act of violent intervention here described might easily have been attributed to Peter in the recollection that, according to Mark, it was he who had rebuked our Lord the first time He spoke of His death ' (Mark viii, 32–33). Westcott, on the contrary, very reasonably remarks that one can easily understand that, at the time of the first drawing-up of the Christian catechesis, the two names of Malchus and Peter would have been omitted, both of them being alive and in Jerusalem, and that such a mention of Peter's name might easily have had dangerous consequences for him. Here, as in a good many other cases, the passage of time enabled John to be more explicit than his predecessors could have been.

From henceforth this was to be the rule of the martyrs of every age. Our Lord had told His Apostles : ‘ . . . I send you as sheep in the midst of wolves ’ (Matt. x, 16). And of this heroic patience, requiring more courage than an armed struggle, He wished to give them an example, which was destined to be understood. It was one of the most hasty among them all—one of the ‘ Sons of thunder ’—no less—who, in the Apocalypse, would describe the rage of the beast who makes war on the saints and triumphs over them for a while. But, confronting him, is the ‘ lamb slain from the foundation of the world ’ ; and the Apostle adds : ‘ If any man have an ear, let him hear . . . he that shall kill by the sword must be killed by the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints ’ (Apoc. xiii, 7-10).

So Jesus cured Malchus ; it was the only miracle He worked that night—a miracle of compassion and kindness to a foe.

Still, He did not intend to let the indignity with which He was treated pass without protest of any kind.

‘ You are come out, as it were, against a robber, with swords and clubs to apprehend Me. I sat daily with you, teaching in the Temple : and you laid not hands on Me. Now all this was done that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled.’

We have here, certainly, the sense of insults sustained, but much more the assertion of the free character of our Lord’s sacrifice. We have only to recall His ascendancy over the traffickers in the Temple, driving them out with whips, while they dared not resist ; and over the Pharisees sent to arrest Him, returning with the words : ‘ Never did man speak like this man ’ (John vii, 46). And it was the same repeatedly with the mob, who, in spite of their wish to stone Him, never dared to seize Him and lead Him away (Luke iv, 30 ; John viii, 20 ; viii, 59 ; x, 39). It was to all this that our Lord alluded when He said : ‘ I was daily with you in the Temple . . . and you did not lay hands on Me.’<sup>1</sup>

In all previous crises of the same kind, the hatred involved was as keen as on that fatal night. Jesus was without defence in His enemies’ hands ; yet they could not seize

<sup>1</sup> Here again we notice that occasions of preaching in the Temple, though not explicitly recorded by the Synoptics, were in their minds ; our Lord’s words could not have referred only to the three preceding days.

Him because His hour was not yet come. But now the contrary is the case. 'This is your hour and the power of darkness.'

His Father no longer protects Him, and He will not protect Himself. 'The chalice which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?' We have here an echo of the prayer of the agony,<sup>1</sup> but a faint echo all the same. He no longer says: 'Let this chalice pass from Me.' The Father presents it, and He receives it from His hands, without showing any desire for its removal by a gesture or a single word. 'Then the disciples leaving Him, fled.' Possibly Peter's blow had caused a scuffle in which the disciples were attacked and threatened with arrest. Certainly they were disconcerted by the calm resignation of our Lord. They still had enough conscious zeal to show some sort of resistance to armed force, but not enough courage to share their Master's fate and let themselves be led away with Him, so they took advantage of the freedom He gave them, and fled.

S. Mark adds: 'And a certain young man followed Him, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body. And they laid hold on him. But he casting off the linen cloth, fled from them naked.' This shows plainly enough that if the disciples had not fled, and their flight had not been covered by our Lord Himself, they would have been taken with Him. The incident seems to be recorded from personal memory by S. Mark and, in this young man, many commentators have recognized S. Mark himself,<sup>2</sup> an identification that would seem still more probable if it could be proved that the Garden of Gethsemani was the property of Mary, the mother of Mark.<sup>3</sup> So this last friend of Jesus had disappeared, and He found Himself alone in the hands of His relentless foes. From henceforth He will not see His

<sup>1</sup> It is by S. John (xviii, 11) that these words are recorded. He does not describe the Agony, which is related by the Synoptics; but he notes its approach (xii, 27) and we catch its echo here.

<sup>2</sup> Huby, *in hoc loco*; Lagrange, *L'Evangile de Jésus Christ*, p. 537, etc.

<sup>3</sup> *Expositor*, IV, n.p. 225, quoted by Swete. On this garden, cp. Abel, *Jérusalem*, II, pp. 302 ff.: 'Every well-managed *villa* or farm had its *torcularium*. . . . Cato required that the *torcularium* should be provided with beds for the use of the guards. According to a papyrus from Fayum, a certain Apollonius is known to have hired an oil-press (*ἐλαιουργεῖον*) along with the rooms in the top storey; which might explain the sudden appearance on the scene of the young man dressed in a linen cloth at the time of our Lord's arrest.'

followers any more, except to witness their fall (Peter) or their grief (Mary and John at the foot of the Cross). He has emerged from His agony exhausted by its terrible anguish and by the sweat of blood ; but for Him there is no more comfort or repose ; nothing but the brutality of His guards, while He awaits approaching torture at the executioners' hands. With all condemned persons this first stage in their captivity is always painful ; but it was more so at this period, when prisoners were treated with a brutality that knew neither pity nor shame.<sup>1</sup>

Such was the treatment that our Lord was beginning to undergo ; but only a few of its more odious features are recorded on the Gospel page : the blow in the presence of the High Priest ; the blows and spitting from the military guard ; the crown of thorns in Pilate's house. We can imagine the rest, coming from men who were simply the priests' servants, and who knew that all services rendered would be an act of service to those in whose employment they were.

In this mob, by whom Jesus was surrounded and dragged away, there was one man whose position was grievous in the extreme ; and that was Judas himself. He was bent on seeing that the prisoner was held fast and given no opportunity to escape ; and in a few moments he would himself deliver Him into the hands of the high priests.

Of all those who bear the responsibility of the death of

<sup>1</sup> Similarly in the Acts of the Lyons martyrs we read of the aged Bishop Pothinus being so brutally treated by the guards who led him to the tribunal that he died while returning to his cell, and it was much the same with S. Polycarp. This old man of eighty-six at first received a certain kindness and consideration from the two magistrates who had come to arrest him. They persuaded him to get into their chariot to convey him to Smyrna where he was summoned to appear. But the moment they saw they could not induce him to deny Christ they brutally thrust him backwards and caused him, old as he was, to fall from the chariot.

Fifty years earlier we see S. Ignatius fetched away by his executioners from Antioch to Rome. The Saint hungers after suffering : ' May the fire, the cross, fighting with wild beasts, laceration, being torn asunder, dislocation of my joints, grinding of my whole body to pulp—may the cruellest tortures of the devil fall to my lot, so I possess in the end Jesus Christ ! ' Even so, in that same epistle and in that same chapter (*Rom.*, v), he finds it necessary to complain of the brutality of his guards : ' From Syria to Rome, by land and sea, by night and by day, I am already in conflict with the beasts, chained to ten leopards as I am. I wish to speak to the soldiers who guard me ; but the better one behaves towards them, the more wicked they show themselves to be. The ill-treatment received at their hands is a school for me, in which I form myself daily ; but I am not hereby justified.'

the Son of God there is none whose culpability equals that of Judas. The executioners who would nail Christ to the cross would find their Victim Himself ready to intercede for them, and to ensure that their blindness should be taken into account. Pilate had less excuse. He could have known who Jesus was ; he had questioned Him at length, recognized His innocence and, finally, through weakness, given Him over to the malice of His foes ; in fact he condemned himself when he told our Lord : ‘ I have power to crucify Thee and I have power to release Thee.’ Still his responsibility was less than that of Judas : ‘ . . . he that hath delivered Me to thee hath the greater sin.’ The Jews, and especially their leaders, were certainly more guilty than Pilate was. For two years they had seen the works and heard the teaching of our Lord : they had ‘ no excuse for their sin.’ And yet it was to them that Peter in his discourse would say : ‘ I know that you did it through ignorance, as did also your rulers. But those things which God had showed by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Christ should suffer, He hath so fulfilled ’ (Acts iii, 17). As for Judas, he was truly without excuse, since he had sinned barefacedly. Chosen by Jesus as one of the twelve, sharer of His life for three years, witness of His miracles, recipient of His most intimate and confidential teaching, himself associated with Christ’s apostolate and having, in His name, worked miracles and conversions like the rest, he had given himself up to Satan, and had sold his Lord. This extreme culpability alone explains Judas’ attitude during these first scenes of the Passion. So great an effort had he made to break away from our Lord that he had plunged desperately into evil ; truly, as the Gospel puts it, Satan had entered into him. And inasmuch as Satan had need of this wretched instrument, he had made him blind and callous. Judas went onwards on his course, and carried out his plan with lowered head, so to speak, like a bull which nothing will stop ; confused and half-paralysed for a moment, he soon recovered himself ; the die was cast, and he would go on to the end. But when the sin was complete Satan opened his eyes and hurled him into despair. In this connection, it has been justly recalled what Tacitus wrote about Nero after he had murdered his mother Agrippina : ‘ When the crime was accomplished, he understood its enormity at last.’<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> ‘ Perfecto demum scelere, magnitudo eius intellecta est ’ (*Annales*, XIV, 10, 1), quoted by Plummer, art. *Judas*, D.B., 797.

### III. *The Jewish Trial.*

Since Judea was under the Romans, it was subject to two different authorities: respectively native, and of the conquering power. Consequently our Lord's trial would take place successively under two jurisdictions; first before the Sanhedrin and then before Pilate himself. The presence of Herod at Jerusalem would even bring it before a third tribunal, namely that of this same prince.

These different stages of the trial are very clearly distinguished in the Gospels; but certain historians refuse to acknowledge them, nevertheless. These are more particularly the Jewish writers, who try to throw off the responsibility that rests upon their race. It will be necessary to discuss these objections before studying in detail the story as told in the Gospels themselves.

In his commentary on the Synoptic Gospels, published in 1909, Montefiore contented himself with allowing the responsibility for the trial to fall upon the Sadducees alone (346): 'The balance of probability strongly inclines to the view that the Gospel narratives are so far correct, in that Jesus was really put to death by the Romans at the instance and instigation of the Jewish authorities, and more especially of the ruling priesthood. That there was any meeting of the full Sanhedrin is most doubtful; doubtful also is the part played by the Scribes and Pharisees; but that the Sadducean priesthood was at the bottom of the arrest and of the "trial," and that the rest of this trial was adequate to obtain a condemnation from Pilate, cannot reasonably be doubted.'<sup>1</sup>

Juster (*Les Juifs dans l'Empire romain*, II, 134) goes further still, totally denying the responsibility of his race. To do this he tries to put the Gospel narrative out of court<sup>2</sup> and concludes that a choice must be made between two hypotheses. One of these is that the trial of Jesus was entirely religious,

<sup>1</sup> The same thesis is defended in the second edition (1927), II, p. 352.

<sup>2</sup> 'As works in which an obscure oral tradition has been repeatedly taken up and retouched to serve divergent apologetic purposes—namely by turns either to exculpate or accuse the Romans or the Jews—and thereby giving rise to multiple contradictions, the Gospels could not possibly serve as a basis on which to construct a juridical theory.

'Now, outside the Gospels, we have no evidence, in the period we are studying, that the judicial sentences of self-governing countries were submitted for confirmation to the Roman Governor of the regions concerned.

'Even if we were to concede to him (Mommson) that the sentences

in which case it evidently took place before the Sanhedrin, and would have ended with the capital penalty in the form, that is, stoning, sanctioned by the Jewish penal code. The other theory is that the trial was purely political in character, being for treason or sedition against the Roman power, and that it was brought to a close by the Roman governor inflicting upon Jesus the punishment in use among the Romans, namely that of the cross. And since no one can doubt that Jesus was not stoned but crucified, it must be concluded that Pilate alone had the responsibility of the sentence, and that the Jews are to be exonerated from all blame. So solid has this whole structure seemed to Loisy that he has built upon it his own theory of S. Stephen's death.<sup>1</sup>

'The evangelists relate what took place and the solution is simple enough. Those who wished to bring about our Lord's death—Pharisees and Sadducees, united by hate—could only initiate a religious trial, and that is what they did. The condemnation pronounced by them had to be confirmed, but it had no chance of being so unless the religious proceedings brought against an innocent man were presented in the guise of a danger to the Roman power. Hence the Messianism with which Jesus was charged took on the hue of sedition before the Roman Governor. When he once determined to act, the case took a turn inspired by him ; and it was brought before his own court. There was only one accusation, that of Messianism, which was blasphemy to the Sanhedrin but revolutionary agitation in Pilate's eyes. The process developed with the

of the Sanhedrin needed to be confirmed by the Procurator—and, after all, it is not impossible—that means, logically, that after confirmation the Jews were at liberty to carry their sentences into effect ! Now it is at this, the most difficult point, that logic and documentary evidence discount the veracity of the evangelists, who maintain that after the trial before the Sanhedrin, in which Jesus was condemned to death, the affair was resumed before Pilate and that Pilate submitted himself to the decision of the Jews . . . having Jesus executed by the Roman soldiery.

'Both juridical principles and simple logic are against admitting that the trial of Jesus provides us with an example (which would be unique) of the confusion of different jurisdictions and juridical methods in countries subject to the Roman Empire. No. Such confusion never existed at all.'

<sup>1</sup> *Actes*, 309 : 'It seems certain that the Sanhedrin retained complete jurisdiction over the Jews of Palestine in religious matters and that their competence was only limited in political affairs (see Juster, II, 127-49). The false perspective in which the evangelists have set our Lord's trial has contributed more than any other cause to lead criticism astray on the point.'

change of jurisdiction, and the execution was naturally ordered by the final court.<sup>1</sup> A simple reading of the Gospel itself is sufficient to establish this order of facts, natural and coherent as it is.

This controversy being disposed of, it becomes necessary to determine more exactly the historical setting in which our Lord's trial took place, and with this in view we must speak first of the Sanhedrin, the court of justice before which He appeared. In this historical reconstruction we might be tempted to make use chiefly of the treatise *Sanhedrin* in the Mishnah. Many historians have done so ; and since the juridical rules there formulated contradict the Gospels on many points, it has been deduced that either the Gospels give us a faulty account of what took place, or our Lord's judges violated all the rules of the Jewish penal code. In this second conclusion there is nothing improbable ; but a more attentive examination of this rabbinical composition puts us on our guard.<sup>2</sup> The fact is that the rules there to be found describe much more the ideal state of things imagined by the rabbis, than the reality which had long passed away when the Mishnah was compiled (at the end of the second and the beginning of the third centuries). One example will suffice to show the character of the work. According to the rabbis the presidency of the Sanhedrin had always belonged to the most famous legists, and the rabbinical tradition classes them in pairs, of which one would be president of the Sanhedrin and the other vice-president.<sup>3</sup> In direct contradiction to this it is well established that the presidency of

<sup>1</sup> Lagrange, *Revue biblique* (1918), p. 264.

<sup>2</sup> Moore, *Judaism*, II, p. 187, after explaining the procedure according to the Mishnah, writes : ' These rules of procedure impress us as purely academic. . . . It cannot be imagined that any government charged with the maintenance of public order and security ever devised and put into practice a code of procedure the effect and intent of which was to make the conviction of criminals impossible,' and, *ibid.*, n. 5 : ' The inquiry whether the trial of Jesus was legal, i.e. whether it conformed to the rules in the Mishnah, is futile because it assumes that those rules represent the judicial procedure of the old Sanhedrin.'

These rules of procedure are explained below, as also the judgement brought to bear on them by Danby and Klausner ; this judgement only confirms that of Moore.

<sup>3</sup> Schürer, II, 254. Cp. Moore, *Judaism*, I, p. 45, n. 2 : ' According to M. Hagigah, ii, 2, the first-named in each pair was the president, the second the vice-president, of the Sanhedrin. This is carrying back into antiquity the organization of the high court after the destruction of Jerusalem.'



the Sanhedrin at no time belonged to the legists, but to the High Priest in office at the time. These chief priests belonged to the aristocratic Sadducees and the rabbis had no more sympathy for them than the Pharisees of their own time. And the same must be said as to the powers of the great court of justice. We are told, for example (*Sanhedrin*, II, 4), that if the king wishes to declare war, he can only do so after a vote of the seventy-one. This king and Sanhedrin alike are dreams of the rabbis ; we should search for them in history in vain.

If we wish to consider, not rabbinic dreams but historical reality, we shall see the Sanhedrin somewhat in this wise.<sup>1</sup> It comes on the scene only in the Hellenic period, under the form of an aristocratic senate, analogous to those we meet with in the Greek cities ; being first mentioned in Josephus (A.J., XII, iii) at the time of Antiochus the Great (223-187). The Machabean movement changed its character, and instead of the ancient sacerdotal families, of hellenizing tendency, the Hasmoneans and their partisans entered the great council, although, under the princes and the High Priests, representatives of the old nobility of Jerusalem still remained. From the reign of Alexandra, the growing influence of the Pharisees brought them into the Sanhedrin. It is called *Sanhedrin*, συνέδριον, for the first time by Josephus, with reference to the trial of Herod (A.J., XIV, ix, 3-5), who was forced to appear before it on a charge of murder, but who avenged himself at once by having all its members put to death. At Herod's death the Sanhedrin found its jurisdiction restricted, like Archelaus' dominions, to Judea and Samaria ; but, on the other hand, in these provinces its authority became greater than it had been under Herod (A.J., XX, x) : ' After the death of Herod and Archelaus, the government became aristocratic, and the High Priests received authority over the people.' At that time it was composed of two principal parties : the nobility, both sacerdotal and lay,<sup>2</sup> which was Sadducean, and the legists, who were Pharisees. The Mishnah reckoned its membership as seventy-one. As to the method of recruiting it, we know very little.<sup>3</sup> The members remained in office for quite a

<sup>1</sup> Schürer, II, 238-67.

<sup>2</sup> The 'ancients,' who represented the lay aristocracy, belonged, like the High Priests, to the Sadducean party. Cp. J. Jeremias, *Jerusalem zur Zeit Jesu* (Leipzig, 1929), II, pp. 88-100.

<sup>3</sup> Moore, I, 82, n. 4 : ' The composition of the Council, or Senate, as it had earlier been called, and the mode of election to it, are nowhere

long time, perhaps for life. Possibly they recruited themselves by co-optation, perhaps they were nominated by the political authorities: Herod or the Romans themselves. The most influential members were the High Priests;<sup>1</sup> and next to them we find the legists, whose knowledge of the law gave them great authority; in the course of the first century, their influence became preponderant.<sup>2</sup> The presidency of the Sanhedrin belonged to the High Priest, and it is in that capacity that Caiaphas appears in the trial of Christ (Matt. xxvi, 3), and Ananias in that of S. Paul (Acts xxiii, 2; xxiv, 1). The legal jurisdiction of the Sanhedrin did not extend beyond Judea and its eleven toparchies; and so long as Jesus was in Galilee He was outside the sphere of its power. Still the decisions of this great body everywhere commanded the respect of pious Jews; it was in this way that Saul was able to receive a mission for Damascus from the Sanhedrin's hands. The nature of this jurisdiction was not that of a religious tribunal like the Inquisition, handing over the execution of its sentences to the civil power. Rather it represented a native judicial body, functioning, in the matters with which it could deal, under the control of the occupying power. Within its province were all causes not belonging to the jurisdiction of an inferior court, nor to that of Rome. We see the Sanhedrin proceeding against Jesus for blasphemy (Matt. xxvi, 65), Peter and John as false prophets and seducers of the people (Acts iv, 5), Stephen as a blasphemer (Acts vi, 13), and Paul for violating the law (Acts xxiii). From these examples we see, too, that it took the initiative in the matter of arrest, and, in any but a capital case (Acts iv, 5), could give a final decision; but it had not the power of life and death. 'It is not lawful for us to put any

described in our sources.' He himself describes it as follows (p. 82): 'In this body, under the presidency of the High Priest, besides the heads of the great priestly families, lay elders, men of rank and authority, had seats: among both, probably, there were legal experts, scribes. The upper priesthood was prevaillingly Sadducean; among the other members of the Sanhedrin the Pharisean party was represented.'

<sup>1</sup> The High Priests, called ἀρχιερεῖς in the Gospel and the Acts, fulfilled the highest sacerdotal functions: High Priest, 'officer' of the temple (στρατηγὸς τοῦ ἱεροῦ) (Acts iv, 1; v, 24) and treasurers. Cp. J. Jeremias, II, 17 ff. They belonged to the priestly aristocracy; and, in our Lord's time, they were mostly sprung from the non-Sadocite families of Boëthus, Hannas, and Phiabi, and regarded as illegitimate (ibid., pp. 54-9).

<sup>2</sup> A.J., XVIII, i, 4, 17.

man to death' (John xviii, 31). Of this restriction of the judicial power of the Sanhedrin, rabbinic tradition has preserved a memory: 'Forty years before the destruction of the Temple, the right of life and death was taken away from Israel' (*Sanhedrin*, Jer., I, 1). 'Forty years' is inexact: this power was lost earlier, at the time when Judea passed under the jurisdiction of a procurator.

This outline confirms what we have already learned from the Gospels. It was at Jerusalem that the greatest danger threatened our Blessed Lord. For this reason it was not possible for Him to remain there, and after a first preaching effort He had to retire to Galilee. His subsequent visits recorded by John were the occasion of as many crises; and if Jesus escaped from His enemies it was only because His time had not yet come. And when at last, at the request of the two sisters, He went up to Bethania, His Apostles felt that He was going to His death. 'The Jews but now sought to stone Thee. And goest Thou thither again?' 'Let us also go that we may die with Him.' Similarly, in Mark, we have the same picture of the Apostles, frightened and sorrowful, following Jesus, who went before.

We have seen, too, how both sections of the Sanhedrin were hostile. The Pharisees had declared themselves so first, and that from the very beginning of our Lord's preaching. The Sadducees were for a long time contemptuous; but at last the popular movement stirred them into action. They saw in it a danger for themselves, and from that day Christ's destruction was already decided upon in their minds. 'It is expedient . . . that one man should die for the people.' It was the same Caiphas, who gave this advice, who would preside a little later at our Lord's trial.

Caiphas was, in fact, High Priest at the time. This office, which by right should have been held for life, had been for a long while precarious and subject to the caprice of the authorities: Herod or the Romans themselves. In the hundred years between the rise of Herod (37 B.C.) and the revolt against Rome (A.D. 67), we reckon twenty-eight high priests. Eight are enumerated during the life of Christ.<sup>1</sup> In spite of these frequent changes in personnel, the power

<sup>1</sup> Joasar, son of Boëthus (4 B.C.), appointed by Herod; by Archelaus: Eleazar, son of Boëthus; Jesus, son of See; and Joasar, a second time; by Quirinius: Annas (6-15); by Valerius Gratus: Ishmael, son of Phiabi; Eleazar, son of Annas; Simon, son of Kamithis; Josephus, surnamed Caiphas (18-36).

remained in the same families more often than not. Thus out of twenty-eight High Priests, there were eight of the family of Annas ; himself, his son Eleazar, his son-in-law Caiphas, his sons Jonathan, Theophilus, Matthias and Annas, and his grandson Matthias, Theophilus' son. We can easily understand the influence that the head of the family, himself a former High Priest, would continue to exercise even after his own departure from office, and we are not surprised to see him taking the trial of Christ in hand.

*The Criminal Procedure of the Treatise 'Sanhedrin.'*

At the head of the story we are about to tell, it will not be without interest to put the judicial rules drawn up by the rabbis ; this is not in order to stress the illegalities committed against our Lord ; there is no proof of the historical character of all the traditions which we are about to pass in review, even if we keep strictly to the Mishnah.<sup>1</sup> Besides, the crimes of which the Jewish leaders were guilty in this affair are graver than all possible errors of procedure which may emerge as we trace the history of the trial. But at least in the treatise *Sanhedrin* we shall find the forms of ideal justice, as conceived by the Jews themselves ; and this will put the gravity of their crime in a clearer light.<sup>2</sup>

Chapter iv : In a case where the penalty is a fine there must be three judges ; in a capital case, twenty-three. In the one, the trial may begin with the evidence of the witnesses for the defence, or for the prosecution, at choice ; in the other, by that of the defence and not of the prosecution. When the penalty is a fine, the condemnation, as also the acquittal, may be carried by a majority of a single vote ; in a capital case, a majority of one shall suffice for acquittal, but two shall be needed for a condemnation. When only a fine is involved, the trial may be begun by day and finished at night ; where the penalty is death, the whole must be carried through by day ; if the trial ends in an acquittal it may be finished the same day ; if in a condemnation, it must not be concluded until the morrow,

<sup>1</sup> As we observed above with G. F. Moore, all this procedure is 'purely academic.' We may read to the same effect H. Danby, 'The bearing of the Rabbinical Criminal Code on the Jewish Trial Narratives in the Gospels,' *J.T.S.* (October, 1919), 51-76, especially 64 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Sanhedrin*, ed. Strack, Berlin, 1910.

which is why such trials do not take place on the eves of the Sabbath or of feasts.

The Sanhedrin was arranged in a semicircle, in such a way that the judges could see each other. Two clerks stood before them, one on the right and the other on the left, recording respectively the words of those who were for condemnation, or for acquittal. Three ranks of disciples sat before them, each having his own place. The following method was adopted of inspiring the witnesses in a capital case with a salutary fear. On being brought into court they were told : ‘ Perhaps you mean to give evidence resting only on supposition or hearsay, like a witness who has learnt his testimony from another, and who says : “ We have heard this from a man worthy of trust ” ? Or perhaps you do not know that at the end we shall check your evidence by questioning and cross-examination ? Note well that capital cases do not resemble those in which there is only a question of a fine. For in these a man may give a sum of money, and all is put right. But in capital cases, he bears the responsibility for the blood of the condemned, and all his descendants to the end of the world. That is why man has been created alone in the world, to teach us that whosoever destroys a life shall be held guilty of having destroyed a whole world.’ A witness was examined under seven heads : ‘ In what week of years ? In what year ? In what month ? On what day of the month ? On what day of the week ? At what hour ? In what place ? ’ Further, they were asked : ‘ Do you know him ? Have you warned him ? ’ . . . The judge who examines well is worthy of praise. Then the second witness was introduced and questioned. If their evidence was found to agree, there began the examination of possible reasons for acquittal. . . . If good reasons could be found, acquittal followed ; if not, judgement was deferred until the next day and they went away two by two ; they ate little and drank no wine the whole day, and pondered the affair all night. The next day they came early to the court. Anyone who, the night before, had expressed himself in favour of condemnation could, at this second session, decide for acquittal, but a change in the opposite sense was not allowed. If twelve were in favour of acquittal and eleven of condemnation, the accused was acquitted ; if eleven voted for acquittal

and twelve for condemnation, appeal had to be made to new judges to the total number of seventy-one. Once the condemnation was pronounced, the prisoner was led away to be stoned ; but even then, if the condemned man claimed to have something to say in his defence, he was brought back to the tribunal up to four or five times, provided that his claim seemed a serious one. The public crier preceded him, announcing : ‘ N N, son of N N, is being led away to be stoned, because he has committed such and such a crime. N N and N N are his witnesses ; whoever knows anything in his favour, let him come forward and make it known.’

In this legislation it is difficult to distinguish between historical tradition and mere imagination. But that matters little here. What is more important is to notice how the Jewish conscience has accumulated precautions, especially in a capital case, to avoid a precipitate judgement, or one dictated by passion alone. The witnesses are warned beforehand of the responsibility they incur ; the judges, so far as possible, are put on their guard against all seduction or attempt to force their hands. When we finish reading this passage and turn once more to the Gospel narrative, we pass from dreams of justice to a reality as odious and brutal as can be conceived. However, there is one word of the treatise that finds an echo in the Gospels and which even now rings in our ears, that is, the warning given to the witness : ‘ . . . he bears the responsibility for the blood of the condemned ’ and ‘ whoever destroys a life shall be held guilty of having destroyed a whole world.’ These words indeed acquire a terrible meaning when it is remembered that the life thus lost is that of the Son of God. ‘ His blood be upon us and upon our children.’

### *Annas and Caiphas.*

‘ Then the band and the tribune and the servants of the Jews took Jesus and bound Him. And they led Him away to Annas first, for he was father-in-law to Caiphas, who was the High Priest of that year. . . . And Annas sent Him bound to Caiphas, the High Priest.’ (John xviii, 12, 13, 24.<sup>1</sup>)

<sup>1</sup> The sequence followed here assumes an inversion of the order of the Scriptural text. Verse 24 is displaced and made to come immediately after v. 13. This reading is adopted by the *Codex Syro-Sinaiticus* and by Cyril of Alexandria. It is accepted by a large number of modern critics,

This appearance before Annas is only known to us through S. John, and does not bear the character of an official examination. By permitting it Caiphas paid a mark of respect to the head of the family and a former High Priest ; and, moreover, in this thorny matter he probably was not sorry to have him as a support.<sup>1</sup>

The 'old stager' of politics received this mark of respect without displeasure, especially as it also ministered to his curiosity, but he avoided becoming deeply involved in the case, which he referred back to his son-in-law. His attitude, curious but cautious as it was, was the same as that instinctively adopted by Herod the Tetrarch, another 'fox.' Jesus then was led to Caiphas ; 'Now Caiphas was he who had given the counsel to the Jews : that it was expedient that one man should die for the people' ; in other words, the judge who was going to try the case had already decided what the sentence was to be. He asked Jesus of His disciples and His doctrine, thus trying to bring together the various

and has the advantage of making it easier to harmonize the accounts of the Synoptics and of S. John. Peter's denial occurred in the palace of Caiphas—where the Synoptics certainly placed it—and it is no longer necessary to suppose that the two palaces had one courtyard between them (Euthymius, Godet, Fouard, etc.) ; the questioning was conducted by Caiphas, and this also agrees with the account of the Synoptics, especially Mark and Matthew.

Still, we might ask whether there is any justification for this amendment of the text beyond purely and simply a desire to harmonize the narratives ; cp. Bernard, *in hoc loco* and *introd.*, p. 27 ; Bauer, *in hoc loco* ; Schmiedel, E.B., 4580.

Without here claiming to have settled the controversy once and for all, we merely adopt this reading, not as certainly true, but as probable.

<sup>1</sup> Josephus, A.J., XX, ix, 1 ff., writes thus about Annas and his family : 'Annas the elder was renowned for his good fortune ; for he had five sons, all of whom were high priests of the Most High, and he himself had held that position for a good number of years, a thing which certainly never fell to the lot of any high priest in our time. Annas the younger, who, as we have seen, succeeded to the High Priesthood, was a harsh manner of man and very bold, besides being attached to the sect of the Sadducees, who are in their judgements the cruellest of all the Jews. Annas, being a man of this character, thought to seize a favourable moment ; Festus had just died, Albinus was on his way to take his place ; he called together the Sanhedrin and summoning before it James, the brother of Jesus called the Christ, and several others, he accused them of having broken the law, and had them stoned. This judgement roused to anger every peaceable and law-abiding citizen in the town ; and they sent messengers in secret to the king, demanding that Annas should henceforth be forbidden to act in such wise—for it was not the first time. And some of their number met Albinus on his way from Alexandria and explained to him that Annas was not allowed to call together the Sanhedrin without his permission, so that Albinus, persuaded by them, wrote angrily to Annas threatening him with punishment.'

elements of the trial. The questions about the disciples might have been simply intended to make clear the significance of our Lord's work ; but they might also have involved an attempt to draw into the case those who had been close followers of Christ. On this point our Lord answered nothing at all ; here, as in the Garden, He wished to be alone in the case. ' If therefore you seek Me, let these go their way.' As regards His teaching He was content to refer the High Priest to the testimony of those who had heard Him. And here again we have an echo of Jesus' words to His would-be captors in the Garden : ' I was daily with you in the Temple teaching.' Witnesses of the teaching thus given are easily found ; let them be brought. This was to recall the judge to legal procedure : it was in no way his duty to catch the accused in a snare, but to confound them by witnesses. Here, too, there is a contrast between the openness and freedom of Christ's teaching, and all the tortuous methods and tricks used against Him. They had spread an ambush for Him, as for a brigand, when they could have arrested Him any day in the Temple ; now they try to catch Him in a snare, as if He was a knave and a seducer, while all the time He had taught in the most open way : ' I have spoken openly to the world. I have always taught in the synagogue and in the Temple whither all the Jews resort. And in secret I have spoken nothing. Why askest thou Me ? Ask them who have heard what I have spoken unto them. Behold, they know what things I have said.' To this the High Priest made no reply, but one of his officers showed his zeal by rudely striking our Lord in the face. Later, S. Paul would be treated in the same way and at the express order of the High Priest himself (Acts xxiii 1, 2) : ' Men, brethren, I have conversed with all good conscience before God until the present day. And the High Priest Ananias commanded them that stood by him to strike him on the mouth. Then Paul said to him : God shall strike thee, thou whited wall. For sittest thou to judge me according to the law and, contrary to the law, commandest me to be struck ? ' We see from this example that these brutalities were well within the customs of the Sanhedrists : S. Paul's indignation was quite natural, and who would blame him ? But in its calm and dignity our Lord's reply was of an infinitely superior kind. ' If I have spoken evil, give testimony of the evil ; but if well, why strikest thou Me ? '



We recognize here the same sovereign voice that we heard in the Garden—so restrained and yet so full of power : and during the Passion its accent will be the same. Surely there is the ideal Martyr whose portrait is painted for us by Jeremias—suffering, sorrowful, broken to the soul's depth, crying to God in the anguish of his heart and yet : ' a wall of brass . . . to the kings of Juda, to the princes thereof, and to the priests and the people of the land.'

By this first examination the High Priest was led to realize the danger of the proceeding in which he was engaged ; he could not tell yet whether he would be likely to triumph over the discretion of the Accused, leading Him on to the imprudent statements for which he hoped. At least he felt keenly the necessity of preparing for to-morrow's session, and of collecting witnesses whose agreement among themselves he would secure. The rest of the night was devoted to these manœuvres and to gathering the Sanhedrin together. But while this violent and confused scene was taking place inside the palace, another drama was being played out in the court of a kind still more painful to our Lord. This was the fall of His Apostle, of the very man who was to be the unshakable rock on which the Church would be built.<sup>1</sup>

The three Synoptics describe S. Peter's denial as taking place in the court of Caiphas' palace. But while Matthew and Mark insert in the middle of this incident the story of our Lord's examination, Luke proceeds without interruption with the story of S. Peter's denial, adding immediately an account of our Lord's ill-treatment and of His final examination before the High Priest. It is in Luke, too, that we find the touching incident of Jesus looking at Peter. In spite of difference of detail, it is beyond question that the same fact is recorded by the Synoptics and S. John. The synoptical writers explicitly recall our Lord's prediction of the event (Matt. xvi, 75 ; Mark xiv, 72 ; Luke xxii, 61), while John (xviii, 27) refers to it implicitly but very clearly nevertheless.

Under these circumstances, everything leads us to discover in all three narratives the record of a triple fall. No doubt, in detail the evangelists differ from each other, and

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxvi, 58, 69-75 ; Mark xiv, 54, 66-72 ; Luke xxii, 54-63 ; John xviii, 15-18, 25-7.

if we wished to construct a complete and minute account of all the denials we should find more than three.

But it is more to the point to consider the three principal situations in which the Apostle succumbed. The scene of the fall is the court of the sacerdotal palace, into which Peter had followed John.<sup>1</sup> There he found himself mingling with the crowd of servants of the High Priest.

The first test was a question on the part of one of these. John, who was known in the house, had had no difficulty in getting in ; but his friend, Peter, remained outside. Seeing this, John said a word to the portress and secured his admission, while John himself did not remain in the court but went on into the palace to follow the examination of Christ. So Peter, finding himself alone in the court, acted like the others and drew near to the fire, thus placing himself in full view of them all. The servant-maid looked at him closely for a moment and then recognizing him, said to the others : ‘ This man also was with Him ’ (Luke xxii, 56) ; and then addressing him directly : ‘ Art thou not also one of his disciples ? ’ And he answered before them all : ‘ I know not what thou sayest.’

Feeling himself suspect, Peter drew aside a little, retiring to the porch (Matt., Mark) ; but the alarm had been given, and on all sides questions began. ‘ This is one of them ’ ; ‘ Art not thou also one of this man’s disciples ? ’ But he denied it again, strengthening his denial by an oath.

Yet another hour passed and the questions began again, and this time they were more pressing ; Peter’s accent and dialect betrayed him and gave the lie to his denials ; moreover, a relation of Malchus asked : ‘ Did I not see thee in the garden with Him ? ’ And the unhappy Apostle, feeling himself thus pressed on all sides, went on stubbornly with his denials and oaths and curses, doubtless in the traditional form : ‘ May God do so to me, and more also, if I have ever known that man.’

And then the cock crew, and Christ came out, encumbered with bonds, and crossed the court, and as He did so looked at His faithless Apostle. And Peter awoke, as if from a bad dream ; the look, the crowing of the cock, the prophecy which it recalled to his mind, all this brought him to himself, and suddenly he saw as an accomplished fact the very

<sup>1</sup> The anonymous disciple mentioned must, it would seem, be John (John xviii, 15 ff.).

fault that he had believed impossible and had committed almost without being aware of the fact. He burst into sobs and went away.

So heavy a fall, following closely upon the most impassioned declaration of fidelity and perseverance until death, is a terrible warning to Christians of every age. No doubt that is why the Lord permitted it, as well as to teach the lesson of the flesh's weakness to His Apostle, so presumptuous up to then. It would seem that this presumption was his greatest fault. Warned so often, he had constantly neglected to watch and pray, and consequently had been content to rely on himself and on the fervour of which he was conscious, which was so soon to grow feeble and cold. The torpor that came over him in the Garden was the first sign of weakness. He had thrown it off by an effort when he drew his sword and struck Malchus, but all his strength was spent in this act of inconsiderate zeal, disowned by our Lord Himself. He had seen Christ give Himself up, and the others flee, and he did as they. Still, he recovered himself once more. He could not take a share in abandoning One whom he loved passionately, after all, and he was determined to 'see the end.' So he took his stand by the palace gate, where John observed him and took him in, alas, exposing him to temptation. This temptation was of a kind for which he was little prepared and which was most dangerous for him : 'Peter was brave and would perhaps have shown more resolution if he had been attacked more openly, and by armed force. But he was always sensitive to other people's opinion (Gal. ii, 11) ; and now he flees before it, trying to escape by an equivocation, affecting not to understand. Actually this was equivalent to saying that he was not our Lord's disciple, but the terms were not formal' (Lagrange). Caught in this net, he became more and more involved, passing on to formal denials, oaths and curses, until Jesus passed and saved His unhappy disciple by a look.

These sobs and tears of Peter were his salvation. We tremble to think of the despair that might have seized upon this unhappy Apostle, with his sensitive nature, at the thought of his terrible sin. But we remember our Lord's own words : 'Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not : and thou, being

once converted, confirm thy brethren' (Luke xxii, 31-32). We remember, too, the storm on the lake, and Peter's sincere but presumptuous request: 'Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come to Thee upon the waters,' and how, seized with sudden doubt, he began to sink, and was rescued by our Lord. To-day the storm is more violent, and the abyss deeper; but if he was already sinking, the same Hand grips him still; and henceforth he knows that it alone can save.

Jesus had saved Peter, but He Himself remained, a plaything in His enemies' hands. '... They spat in His face and buffeted Him, and others struck His face with the palms of their hands, saying, Prophecy unto us, O Christ, who is he that struck Thee?' (Matt. xxvi, 67, 68; cp. Mark xiv, 65). And the servants imitated their masters, giving themselves up to the sport with a light heart: '(they) mocked Him and struck Him. And they blindfolded Him and smote His face. And they asked Him, saying: Prophecy, who is it that struck Thee?'<sup>1</sup> (Luke xxii, 63).

After what had taken place in full council before the High Priest, these revolting outrages can cause no surprise. We have only to think of the long-standing grudges accumulated against our Lord, and of the many attempts to seize and do Him to death. At last, the Sanhedrists had Him at their mercy; each one contributed his blow or his insult, while the servants went further than their masters in these displays of brutality and hate.

And Jesus kept silence. This is not to say, however, that He was insensible to these scandalous affronts. Indeed He felt all their bitterness. In His predictions about His Passion, He made no reference to them at first; but, on the last occasion, on His way from Jericho to Jerusalem, when He wished more carefully than ever to forewarn His Apostles against all the disasters that were to come, He mentioned this evil treatment as among the most painful torments He would undergo:

'Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man shall be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes

<sup>1</sup> This brutal sport of the soldiers seems to have been suggested by a children's game, similar enough to our own Blind Man's Buff, and thus described by Pollux (*Onomast.*, IX, 129): 'Someone covers his eyes with his hands; another strikes him, asking him with which hand he had struck him; this is called *κολλαβίζειν*' (quoted by W. C. van Unnik, *Z.n.t.W.*, 1930, p. 311).

and ancients. And they shall condemn Him to death and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles. And they shall mock Him and spit on Him and scourge Him and kill Him : and the third day He shall rise again.' (Mark x, 33, 34.)

These indignities would be renewed shortly in Pilate's house, with greater cruelty but less religious caricature ; while on His very Cross the dying Lord would be exposed to the derision of His foes.

And so it was throughout His Passion. Our Blessed Lord was always to suffer both ignominy and torture, thus at the same time making reparation for our faults both of sensuality and pride. After commenting on these painful incidents S. Chrysostom adds (*Hom. lxxxv, 757*) : ' Let us never cease to read these stories ; let us listen to them as we should ; let us grave them on our heart, for they are our glory. Here is what gives me sublime thoughts of Christ—not only the myriads whom He has raised from the dead, but the suffering He has endured. These are the memories that S. Paul puts unceasingly before our eyes : His cross, His death, His sufferings, the insults, mockeries and outrages He endured.' And then he adds : ' Let us go forth, therefore, to Him without the camp, bearing his reproach ' (*Heb. xiii, 13*).

*The Condemnation of Jesus by the Sanhedrin.* (Matt. xxvi, 59–xxvii, 2 ; Mark xiv, 53–xv, 1 ; Luke xxii, 54–xxiii, 1.<sup>1</sup>)

The event described in these passages is of capital importance in the story of the Passion of our Blessed Lord. The condemnation before Pilate would be no more than the result of what was decided by the Sanhedrin at this time. In the rejection of the Messias, the rupture between God and His people is complete, and it is in this sinister assembly that it takes place. But at the same time this scene, so full of pain and shame if we think of the part played in it by our Lord's enemies, takes on an entirely opposite aspect when we turn our attention to Jesus Himself. For it was then that He gave that categorical testimony of Himself,

<sup>1</sup> The examination of Jesus is reported by Matthew and Mark as having taken place at the night session ; by Luke, at the morning session. ' Luke's order is much more probable ; we cannot really admit the possibility of two sessions almost exactly similar ' (*Lagrange, L'Evangile, p. 544, n. 1*). S. John says nothing of this session.

that He was about to seal with His own blood. Until then, knowing that His hour had not come, He had avoided this express declaration, which His enemies sought to wring from Him in vain. 'How long dost Thou hold our souls in suspense? If Thou be the Christ, tell us plainly' (John x, 24). Especially during this last week the Pharisees had multiplied questionings and traps to force Jesus either to disclaim His Messiasship or to acknowledge it in an unequivocal way. But He had always foiled their manœuvres in the past. Now He was going to anticipate them instead, and, applying to Himself the most formal prophetic passages of the Old Testament, declare Himself Messias and Son of God. The years of instruction were passed and the time of martyrdom had come. He would bear testimony to Himself. And so at this stage of His trial, where He seemed to be the plaything of His enemies, Christ triumphed after all. In spite of Caiphas and his friends, the decisive question as to our Lord's Messiasship and Divine Sonship was put just as He willed it to be. Every effort was made to draw Him on to other ground, and to secure His condemnation as a blasphemer of the Temple; but the whole network of captious testimony fell to pieces of its own accord, and the decisive question had to be put: 'Art Thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Several critics of the radical school, for example, Wellhausen and Montefiore (1st ed., p. 348; 2nd ed., p. 355), have attempted to correct the Gospel narrative (this correction has been rightly rejected by Ed. Meyer, I, pp. 188 ff.). The Gospel text distinguishes clearly between two juridical charges brought against Christ; the first, formulated by the witnesses, relates to the destruction of the Temple; the second, raised by the question of the High Priest, is founded on the messianic claims. It is suggested that only the first of these two is historic. The first argument put up is that our Lord's claim to be the Messiah was not a blasphemy: 'To the Jews, a man who claimed to be the Messiah was not a criminal, as he was to the Romans. Although one cannot well doubt that Jesus ended by representing Himself publicly as the Messiah, and was therefore crucified by Pilate, nevertheless His condemnation by the Jewish authorities must necessarily have had another legal motive than this. According to Jewish ideas there could be no blasphemy in a man's declaring himself to be the Messiah, the Son of God' (Montefiore, 2nd ed., 356). He adds that the earliest Christians largely shared the Jewish respect for the Temple, and they would have hated to think that it was for having blasphemed against it that Jesus had been condemned. They preferred to divert the force of the accusation against the messianic claim, which was the great bone of contention between Jews and Christians.

This is all very ingenious, but very weak; we shall see presently that the messianic claims of Jesus, formulated as they were, *could* have seemed blasphemous to His enemies. As for the words relating to the Temple, we can understand that they had been collected and repeated by witnesses

We notice from the first, in the Gospel records, the attempts of Christ's enemies to combine under one head many false testimonies. The rabbinical writings themselves seem to preserve the memory of a snare set for our Lord.<sup>1</sup> And this is a curious fact when we remember that, of His life and trial, they have, for the most part, preserved only traces, half concealed and deliberately defaced.

The first thing to be remarked in the Gospel narrative is that Judas appears to have no place in this inquiry. And yet his testimony would have been of the greatest value to our Lord's enemies, enabling them to penetrate to the intimacy of the apostolic band. For example, it might have brought out the incident at Cæsarea Philippi and the explicit declaration of Messiasship there made, which they had looked for elsewhere in vain. It is probable that, by this time, the traitor had come to look with horror on the part he had played. He had promised to deliver up his Master, and had fingered his money. He had carried out the task for which he had been paid, but he would go no further, contenting himself with watching the results of his treason from a distance, and not without anguish of mind.

In default of him, the Sanhedrists had at their call only persons drawn from the vulgar crowd of the Master's hearers, who, without following the Master closely or being intimately initiated into His teaching, had listened to Him from time to time. They denounced, while at the same time garbling what had been said about the Temple by our Lord. In John ii, 18, we are told that when He drove the traffickers out of the Temple, He was asked to prove by

for the prosecution, who were merely searching their memories for some pretext on which to base a condemnation, but they bore too manifestly the mark of a misapprehension to be able to support the whole structure of the trial, even before the most biased of judges. To get out of the difficulty, Caiphas tried to provoke our Lord to declare Himself the Messias, just as the Pharisees had so often tempted Him to do. And this time, contrary, no doubt, to his expectation, Jesus completely disclosed Himself and rendered any further examination unnecessary.

<sup>1</sup> *Sanhedrin*, X, 11: 'In the case of those accused on a capital charge, resort is not to be had to a trick except in the case of those deemed guilty of leading others astray. Two of the sage's disciples are posted in an inner room, he himself being made to sit in the outer one, where a lamp is placed in such a way that (the witnesses) can see him and hear every word he says. In this way Ben Stada was dealt with at Lud. Two of the sage's disciples were chosen to spy on him, and they led him to the Sanhedrin and stoned him.'

This passage was developed a little by the Gemara of Jerusalem and also that of Babylon, and the second version is especially interesting.

a sign His right to act in such a way. And His answer was : ' Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up. The Jews then said : Six and forty years was this temple in building ; and wilt Thou raise it up in three days ? But He spoke of the temple of His body. When, therefore, He was risen again from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this : and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had said ' (John ii, 19-22).

Our Lord's hearers were misled as to the meaning of this saying, and it was not until after the resurrection that it was understood by the disciples themselves ; but however obscure it might be, it could not have appeared as a blasphemy unless its form were completely changed. This is what it became in the testimony of these two men : ' I am able to destroy the temple of God and after three days to rebuild it ' (Matthew) ; ' I will destroy this temple made with hands, and within three days I will build another not made with hands ' (Mark).

All this was neither consistent nor clear ; still, it was a grave charge. To the Jews, the Temple was the most sacred thing on earth and, as Fr. Lagrange reminds us, Jeremias had been judged worthy of death for having prophesied its fall (Jer. xxvi, 6). It is possible that to Christ's words, as John records them, there had been added prophecies uttered by our Lord during this last week.

The whole of this examination has been briefly summar-

After describing, like the Tosephta, the relative dispositions of the witnesses, it goes on : ' Someone says to him : " Tell me privately what thou saidst to me." And he tells him. And another says to him : " How is it necessary that we should desert our God, who is in Heaven, to practise a false religion ? " If he repents, it is well. If, on the other hand, he says : " It is our duty, in such wise we are bound to do," the witnesses listening outside (here the relative dispositions are reversed) lead him away to Beth-Din and stone him. Even so did they with Ben Stada at Lud, and they hung him on the eve of the Passover ' (*b. Sanh.*, 67a).

Ben Stada here, as elsewhere in the Talmud, is another name for Jesus. The mention of Lud (Lydda) is rather strange ; it is explained possibly by the fact that after the destruction of Jerusalem Lydda became the capital of Rabbinical Judaism. The Tosephta says that Jesus was stoned ; but elsewhere one reads : ' He was hung on the eve of the Passover ' (*b. Sanh.*, 67a).

In respect of the other details it is difficult to follow Herford who delves back for their historical origins. All that is necessary to remember is that in the Rabbinical tradition the trial of Jesus was conducted outside the normal regulations, and that His condemnation was obtained by a trap ; the whole business was rather dishonest, and the Rabbis in their hearts felt so themselves ; but with a seducer, they thought, anything was allowable. Cp. Herford, *Christianity in Talmud and Midrash* (London, 1903), pp. 78 ff.



ized by the evangelists ; but what they say about it is sufficient to show the prejudice and embarrassment of the judge by whom the inquiry was carried on. There was no lack of witnesses ; they had come in considerable numbers in fact ; but they all were confused, and contradicted each other until the evidence of the two whose deposition is here recorded was reached. To escape from the difficulty, Caiphas asked Jesus what He had to say in reply to all this.<sup>1</sup>

But our Lord kept silence, and His silence deprived Caiphas of his last weapon. So, in despair of gaining anything of value on the question of the destruction of the Temple, the High Priest passed to another question—the essential question really, but kept back until then. ‘Art Thou the Christ, the Son of God?’ and he put the question in such a way as to make the reply an oath : ‘I adjure thee by the living God’ (Matt.).

This, it would have seemed, was the first question to have put to Christ, for there lay the great quarrel between the leaders of the people and Himself. Further, it was the only complaint of a religious kind that would make any impression upon Pilate ; and in bringing Jesus before the governor, it was most necessary to put the matter on this ground. So it may well be asked, why was this not done at once?<sup>2</sup>

To put the question directly on the ground of messianic claims was, from several points of view, little to be desired. To claim to be the Messiah was not, in itself, a blasphemy, at least if not associated—as usually—with more ambitious claims. It was, therefore, difficult to hope to destroy Jesus

<sup>1</sup> The text of Mark it would seem, must be rendered in the form of two separate questions : ‘Answerest Thou nothing ? What witness do these men bring against Thee ?’

<sup>2</sup> So he decided (not, of course, without a certain reluctance, since he had not so begun) to ask Jesus point-blank whether He claimed to be the Messiah or not. To understand the gravity of this question in the trial, we must bear in mind two facts. First, they had thoroughly set their faces against acknowledging the messianic dignity of the Galilean which, besides, did not present itself at all in the form previously determined upon by the science of the schools, and the popular conceptions of the time. Second, if by chance Jesus had said : “No, I am not” (which He might easily have done, for the very reasons we have just pointed out), all the legal pretexts for a death-sentence would have been lacking, and it would have been necessary to have recourse to some extra-judiciary violence which, on account of the Romans, was difficult, as we shall see later on. Possibly they would have been reduced to discrediting Him before the people by a negative statement, getting Him out of the way later at the first opportunity that occurred’ (Reuss, *Hist. Evang.*, 664).

in this way. And then, the fresh memory of recent controversies had warned the Pharisees of the extreme difficulty they would find in enticing our Lord on to ground where He was not willing to follow and in drawing Him out of a reserve which had become with Him a rule. It was for them to remember the discomfiture of those who had asked on what authority Christ had acted, or again of those who had questioned Him on the tribute to be given to Cæsar. If, then, before all the people, ready to defend Him if He asserted His messianic role, or to be scandalized if He denied it, it had not been possible to make Him declare Himself, greater success could scarcely be hoped for in this judicial examination, in which Jesus knew that the witnesses had failed to accomplish His destruction, and that He could no longer be compromised by His own replies.

To Caiphas the hope of success seemed slight, but it was the last chance, and he tried it, adding urgency to his questions by the solemn adjuration which accompanied them. Thus, judicially examined by the highest religious authority of the nation, and commanded in God's name to reply, He did so. He knew that this reply would sign His death-warrant, but He, first of all the martyrs, was willing to seal, by His testimony and His blood, this truth on which our whole faith rests. For the rest, it must be observed that Caiphas' questions and Jesus' reply went beyond the simple claim of Messiahship and reached the level of the divine Sonship itself.<sup>1</sup>

The discussion that had taken place in the Temple during this week had thrown a vivid light on the preaching of our Lord. His pressing questions about the Messiah, the Son

<sup>1</sup> On this particularly important point we need to notice the subtle shades of difference between the three Synoptics. Matt. xxvi, 63, 64: 'And the High Priest said to Him: I adjure Thee by the living God, that Thou tell us if Thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith to him: Thou hast said it. Nevertheless I say to you, hereafter you shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of the power of God, and coming in the clouds of heaven.' Mark xiv, 61: 'Again the High Priest asked Him, and said to Him: Art Thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed God? And Jesus said to him: I am. And you shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of the power of God, and coming with the clouds of heaven.' Luke xxii, 66-70: 'And as soon as it was day, the ancients of the people, and the chief priests and scribes came together, and they brought Him into their council, saying: If Thou be the Christ, tell us. And He saith to them: If I shall tell you, you will not believe Me: and if I shall also ask you, you will not answer Me, nor let Me go. But hereafter the Son of Man shall be sitting on the right hand of the power of God.'

of David, and the parable of the husbandmen, had made it clear to all, both friends and enemies, that the Messiahship that He claimed implied a higher origin than that involved in Davidic descent, and united Him to His Father, God, by ties which isolated Him from humanity at large : other men were servants ; He the only and well-beloved Son.

All this had been said openly in the Temple, face to face with the Pharisees, and had not failed to be reported to the chief priests, who just then were thinking of nothing but of preparing a case against Jesus. These, therefore, were the statements that suggested to Caiphas the questions that he put to our Lord. No more than the rest of his party did the High Priest take the messianic hopes seriously ; much less was he tempted to go beyond the popular beliefs. If he did so on this occasion, it was because he was led to it by our Lord's own statements and because, in these high claims, he sensed the possibility of the imprudent avowal that it was his object to obtain.

And, the moment he heard it, he emphasized its significance by the indignation that he affected ; tearing his clothes and crying aloud that blasphemy had taken place.

It is admitted,<sup>1</sup> and we have already observed as much, that a mere claim to be the Messiah was not regarded as a blasphemy in itself. What in Caiphas' eyes constituted the blasphemy here, was the superhuman and truly divine dignity that, in proclaiming that He was the Messiah, Jesus asserted for Himself.

This accusation of blasphemy, which alone could involve condemnation to death, was all that Caiphas had in view in this examination, and we can understand with what eagerness he seized upon it, turning it to his own ends. At last he had his prey within his grasp, and on the horns of a fatal dilemma. Either He must deny His mission or con-

Then said they all : Art Thou then the Son of God ? Who said : You say that I am.'

According to Matthew and Mark, the High Priest asks Him point-blank : ' Art Thou the Christ, the Son of God ? ' According to Luke, the question is simply : ' If Thou be the Christ, tell us ! ' And Jesus' reply, stating definitely His claim to be Messiah, leads to the second question : ' Art Thou then the Son of God ? '

<sup>1</sup> Billerbeck, I, 1017 : ' The Jewish conscience was not shocked at the idea of the man chosen by God to be the Messiah knowing and representing himself as such. . . . Consequently the High Priest could have seen no blasphemy in a simple claim on our Lord's part to be the Messiah.'

demn Himself to death. He seemed to have triumphed ; but the real victor was the Condemned. Jesus was going to His death, and He knew it and willed it too. But He would not undergo this death, prepared for Him by His enemies under a pretext that was false. He intended His death to be a martyrdom, which should put upon His teaching the final seal, so He rejected or ignored all false charges : before the Sanhedrin it is no longer a question of the Temple ; and shortly, before Pilate, the charge of sedition would have to be given up. If He is condemned by the Jewish and Roman tribunals, it will be as the Son of God. So far from avoiding or ignoring this accusation, He affirmed it in the clearest terms.

To convey the full force of this declaration, our Lord appealed to two of the most explicit passages to be found in the Old Testament. One of these is Dan. vii, 13, 14 :

‘ I beheld therefore in the vision of the night, and lo, one like the son of man came with the clouds of heaven. And he came even to the Ancient of days : and they presented him before him. And he gave him power and glory and a kingdom : and all peoples, tribes and tongues shall serve him. His power is an everlasting power that shall not be taken away : and his kingdom that shall not be destroyed.’

This passage, vividly echoed in the Book of Enoch, was familiar to all Jews, and Christ had already appealed to it more than once. This title of ‘ Son of Man,’ which He had adopted almost as His personal name, called up this superb vision, and, almost always when He presented Himself under this title to His Apostles, He reminded them of the vast perspectives that that vision contained. And He added that this Son of Man would appear seated at the right hand of the Power (of God). This was an allusion to another messianic text, also well known to the Jews (Ps. cix, 1) : ‘ The Lord said to my Lord : Sit Thou at My right hand.’ Scarcely a few days before, our Lord had reminded the Pharisees of this verse, while asking them how the Messiah, whom they recognized as the Son of David, could be at the same time David’s Lord. They were confounded and silenced, and now He repeats this verse, applying it to Himself and presenting Himself not only as the Messiah, son of David, but as His Lord.

And in making this reply Christ was not only vindicating His title but also giving a last warning to those by whom He was judged. To all appearance He was delivered into their power, helpless and already condemned; and yet this hour of darkness was, for Him, the dawn of a triumphal day. We have observed several times how, in S. John, our Lord's torments were to be also the principle of His exaltation: 'I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to Myself.' And on this day, in the darkest hour of His Passion, He repeats this statement with the same assurance: 'Hereafter you shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of the power of God.' The proto-martyr of the Church before his judges would be granted the vision of this glory of Christ: 'I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God' (Acts vii, 56). On hearing this, Stephen's judges fell into a transport of rage; stopping their ears, they threw themselves upon him, and dragged him outside the city to stone him. The Master was treated like the disciple would be later on. The High Priest tore his clothes: 'What further need have we of witnesses? Behold, now you have heard the blasphemy. What think you? But they answering, said: He is guilty of death.'<sup>1</sup> Then they knew what procedure to take and what accusations to bring, and at once betook themselves to the Pretorium, dragging Jesus with them as they went. It was then that Judas, seeing his Master condemned, suddenly understood the enormity of his crime, and gave way to despair. S. Matthew relates how this revulsion of feeling took place:

'Then Judas, who betrayed Him, seeing that He was condemned, repenting himself, brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and ancients, saying: I have sinned in betraying innocent blood. But they said: What is that to us? Look thou to it. And casting down the pieces of silver in the Temple, he departed and went and hanged himself with an halter. But the chief

<sup>1</sup> People rent their garments as a sign of grief, at the death of a father, a mother, or a master (Billerbeck, I, 1007); also to express pain and indignation at hearing a blasphemy. It was customary for judges to do it when a witness gave them the terms of a blasphemy he had heard: *Sanh.*, vii, 5 (*ibid.*, 1022). When the witnesses had concluded their evidence, the judge presiding would turn to his assistants with the question: 'Will you give me your opinion?' They would reply: 'For life' or 'For death' (Billerbeck, I, 1020, following Tanchuma, 126a).

priests having taken the pieces of silver, said : It is not lawful to put them into the corbona, because it is the price of blood.' (Matt. xxvii, 3-6.)

This incident is described with almost cruel precision and restraint. All Satan's victims come under review just as Satan had left them when they had done his work. Judas, whom he needed no longer and had thrust contemptuously on one side ; the priests who swallowed the camel while they strained out the gnat ; they had no scruple about Christ's death, yet dared not touch the price of blood, and would use it to perform a work of charity. And Judas, driven to despair at the thought of his crime, went away and hanged himself.

This tragic story stands out in a still more vivid light if we compare it with the ideal legislation represented by the Rabbis as that followed by the Sanhedrin. We may well ask where are the grave admonitions to the witnesses not to burden their conscience in any way ; where those repeated appeals for witnesses for the defence, never ceasing even on the road to execution itself. Here none care for the traitor's distress. 'I have sinned in betraying innocent blood.' 'What is that to us? Look thou to it.' Not a soul thought of turning this change of attitude to the benefit of the accused. Only one thing matters now : to force Pilate's hand and wring a condemnation from him.

There are to be found in Christian antiquity one or two authors who have somehow managed to take the part of the traitor in his despairing death. Origen, *In Matt.* (P.G., XIII, 1766-7), although he dare not excuse him, interprets his death in this too-indulgent way : 'As soon as he saw Jesus delivered to Pilate, he repented ; perhaps he remembered that Christ had often spoken of His future resurrection to His disciples. So, realizing what he had lost, Judas repented and confessed his sin in betraying the blood of the Just One, but he did not know how his repentance was to be carried out. He could think of nothing but to anticipate the death of his Master by his own, and to go before Him in his soul separated from the body, to obtain mercy by confession and prayer.' This strange interpretation has found no echo in the Church, nor should it ; it was not after death, in the other life, that Judas could hope to obtain his pardon, but in the very hour of his sin, like Peter, by a look

from Christ. But he had to get the better of his despair, believing still in the love of Him whom he had betrayed. Judas had not the courage to make this supreme effort; he hanged himself, and on his memory hangs the terrible judgement of Christ: 'It were better for him if that man had not been born.'<sup>1</sup>

#### IV. *The Roman Trial.*

The procurator before whom Jesus was about to appear<sup>2</sup> was one of those who governed longest in Judea. Appointed by Tiberius in the twelfth year of his reign (26), he remained in charge ten years. It would be rash to see in the length of his administration the proof of his integrity. In these matters Tiberius applied a principle that he held dear, namely that newly-arrived governors make haste to enrich themselves, but when they have been in charge for some time they are less avaricious, having already had their fill. This pleasantry he enlivened by a comparison for which Josephus is our authority (A.J., XVIII, vi, 5): 'A wounded traveller lay stretched out upon a road, his wound covered with flies. These were observed by a passer-by who, out of pity, wished to drive them away. "Do nothing of the kind," said the wounded man: "these are already gorged and less greedy; if you drive them away, others, more voracious, will come."' This little parable does not suggest a high idea of the integrity of his administrators on Tiberius' part, nor did Pilate merit any such regard. Some contemporary historians have sought to rehabilitate him, notably Jackson and Lake in their book, *The Beginnings of Christianity* (p. 13); and Renan (*Vie de Jésus*, 414) had already written: 'All the acts of Pilate known to us show him as a good administrator. In his first years of office he had had difficulties with his subjects, whom he had dealt with very brutally, but not, it would seem, at bottom, without reason. The Jews must have seemed to him a backward people. No doubt he would

<sup>1</sup> The Cainite Gnostics made Judas one of their heroes. He had, according to them, the especial merit of having overturned the power of the Demiurge in causing the death of Christ; they even attributed to him a Gospel of Judas: Iren., I, 31, 1; Epiph., *haer.*, I, 38, 1; Theodoret, *haeret. fabul.*, I, 15; ps. Tert., 2. This is an instance of those absurd imaginings by which the Gnostic sects allowed themselves to be carried away.

<sup>2</sup> On this appearance before the judges, cp. Regnault, *Une province procuratorienne au début de l'empire romain. Le procès de Jésus-Christ*, Paris, 1909; K. Kastner, *Jesus vor Pilatus*, Münster, 1912.

have judged them as a liberal prefect would have judged the old-fashioned Bretons, flying into revolt at the opening of a new road, or the establishment of a school.' The Jewish historians who refer to the matter are far from speaking in this detached tone. So Josephus (B.J., II, ix, 2, 169 ff.) :

' Pilate, who had been sent by Tiberius as procurator into Judea, had the effigies of Cæsar, known as insignia, brought into Jerusalem by night and covered with a veil. When the morning came this spectacle stirred up a great tumult among the Jews. The Jewish mob gathered round Pilate at Cæsarea to implore him to withdraw the insignia from Jerusalem and to maintain the laws that their ancestors had handed down. Since Pilate refused, they lay down around his house and there remained prostrate for five days and five nights. The next day Pilate sat before his tribunal in the Grand Stadium and called together the people on the pretext of giving them a reply. Then he gave the signal to the soldiers in arms to surround the Jews. When they saw the troops massed around them in three ranks the Jews were in consternation at this spectacle, entirely unforeseen. Having threatened to slaughter them if they did not receive Cæsar's images, Pilate made a sign to the soldiers to draw their swords. But the Jews with one accord threw themselves on the ground in close ranks, offering their necks to the blade, declaring themselves ready to die rather than violate their law. Struck with astonishment before such ardent religious zeal, Pilate gave the order to withdraw the insignia from Jerusalem without delay. A little later he caused another rising by using up the sacred treasure known as Corbona to make an aqueduct, the water being brought a distance of more than fifty miles. At this news the people were filled with indignation, and gathered vociferating around Pilate's tribunal, he being then at Jerusalem. But he, having foreseen the sedition, had taken care to mingle with the crowd a troop of soldiers, armed but in civilian dress, and while forbidding them to use the sword commanded them to strike the demonstrators with clubs. From the vantage-point of his tribunal he gave the agreed signal, and the Jews perished in large numbers, some under the soldiers' blows, some by crushing each other in their flight. The mass of the people, terrified by this massacre, fell back in silence.'



Similarly, Philo, quoting a letter from Agrippa to Caius :

‘ Pilate, who was procurator of Judea, consecrated inside Jerusalem, in Herod’s palace, some golden shields, less to honour Tiberius than to displease the people. They bore upon them no image nor anything that was expressly forbidden, but only an inscription containing the names of those who had dedicated them and him to whom the dedication had been made. The news having spread, the people assembled and sent the king’s four sons as a deputation to the procurator. . . . To these entreaties Pilate gave a refusal full of the spirit of inflexible obstinacy, for he was of a hard and self-opinionated character. . . . Then there was a cry : “ We will not address ourselves to you, we will send deputies to carry a petition to the supreme lord himself.” These words increased his irritation more than anything else. He was afraid that, if deputies were sent, the other misdeeds of his administration would be discovered : his robberies, his injustices, his outrages, the citizens whom he had put to death without trial, and finally his insupportable cruelty in general. Wounded to the quick, Pilate did not know what step to take. He dared not remove the consecrated objects, nor did he wish to be more lenient to his subjects ; besides, he knew Tiberius’ severity in matters of this kind. The Jewish leaders divined the state of affairs easily enough, and saw that Pilate regretted what he had done, although he did not wish to show it. So they wrote to Tiberius a letter filled with petitions couched in the humblest terms. Although little inclined to anger, when the Emperor heard of Pilate’s reply and of his threats, he became visibly annoyed, a fact scarcely worth recording, since its proof is in the event. On the spot and without putting the matter off for a single day, he wrote to Pilate, energetically blaming him for his rashness and ordering him to remove the shields at once. From the Jewish metropolis they were carried to Cæsarea, the city to which his great-grandfather Augustus had given his name ; and there they were consecrated in the temple of Augustus. In that way the respect due to the prince was brought into harmony with the observance of the ancient customs of the country.’<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Leg. ad Caium*, 38, 299–305 (M., II, 589 ff.). This incident is assigned by Delaunay to the year 32 ; cp. Schürer, I, 492, n. 147 : it would seem to belong to the last years of Pilate’s administration, since according to

We may also recall the incident mentioned by Luke (xiii, 1) of the Galileans whose blood Pilate mingled with their sacrifices ; of the sedition in which Barabbas had taken part (Mark xv, 7) ; and finally of the events that led to Pilate's recall. In 35 a pseudo-prophet had promised the Samaritans to show them on Mount Gerizim the sacred vessels of the former temple. A crowd assembled at Tirathana at the foot of the mountain, where they were attacked by soldiers at Pilate's command. Some fled, and others were taken, the most important of them being tried and executed. Complaint was made to Vitellius, proconsul of Syria, who sent Pilate to Rome where he did not arrive until after Tiberius' death (Josephus, A. J., XVIII, iv, 1, 2).

These various incidents give us a good idea of the procurator's character ; always hostile in his dealing with the Jews, seeing the menace of sedition on every side, and ready at the least alarm to resort to cruelty and executions. For such a man, so suspicious by nature, and with so little respect for Jewish life, to have hesitated to deliver Jesus to the executioners, he must have been well satisfied as to the emptiness of the charge brought against our Lord. At the same time we see something of the terrible fanaticism of the Jews. Even at Cæsarea, at the beginning of his administration, Pilate had to yield in the matter of the insignia, and at Jerusalem his position was more difficult still. There especially a rising was a thing to be dreaded, and at the Passover above all. Finally, the threat of recourse to Tiberius was by no means a vain one, as Pilate had learnt to his cost in the matter of the shields ; the consequences might be graver still in the matter of our Lord's trial.<sup>1</sup>

Knowing now something about the procurator we can more easily follow the story of our Lord's appearance in court and condemnation.<sup>2</sup>

Philo, *Leg.*, 24, it was after the death of Sejanus (A.D. 31) that Tiberius became well disposed towards the Jews. Sejanus had been a great enemy of theirs, and to him we must attribute the expulsion of the Jews from Rome (19) and Pilate's brutality on his arrival in Judea. Cp. *supra*, pp. 111 ff.

<sup>1</sup> Legend has possessed itself of the fact of Pilate's disgrace and gives various accounts of his death : Schürer, I, 492, n. 151 : It seems at least certain that his death was a violent one. Eusebius quotes 'the Roman historians' in this connection (*Chron.*, II, 150 ; cp. H.E., II, 7), and Philo ranks him among the persecutors of the Jews whom God punished by a violent death (Schürer, III, 679).

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xxvii, 11-14 ; Mark xv, 2-5 ; Luke xxiii, 2-4 ; John xviii, 28-38.

In comparing the accounts of the various Gospels we recognize once more the three groups that we have often distinguished before : Matthew-Mark ; Luke ; and John. The first, which was the most explicit on the Jewish trial, is the most summary on the Roman trial. Luke is more detailed, and adds the examination before Herod, which is recorded by him alone. John is the most complete of all on what took place in the Pretorium, and it is he who really enables us to consider the points which are dismissed by the other writers with a word.

To grasp the bearing of this new phase in the trial of our Lord, we must first be clear about the relation between the Jewish and the Roman trials. As we have already seen, and as S. John's narrative will remind us more explicitly later on, the Jews had no longer the power of life and death. We cannot, therefore, say that they came to claim from Pilate an *exequatur* for the sentence they had passed ; in fact, it is clear that a new trial had commenced. H. Regnault<sup>1</sup> thus presents the chain of events. 'The Jews alone took Jesus, by night, leading Him before the Sanhedrin, much less to obtain a regular judgement than to establish the blasphemous character of His words. Then, when everyone was convinced that He was worthy of death, there emerges a fact that seems at first sight inexplicable, that is, a second meeting of the Sanhedrin. Thanks, however, to Matthew's account its utility is perfectly clear : "And when morning was come (they) took counsel against Jesus, that they might put Him to death." Indeed that was the only part of the programme yet to be fulfilled : Pilate must slay Him whom the interested parties have found guilty. So in this morning's session there is a discussion as to what accusation shall be brought before the procurator, and what complaints will be necessary for a condemnation to be secured. We may recall Pilate's hesitation, sarcasms and declarations of the innocence of our Lord ; probably due much less to the procurator's belief in the innocence of his prisoner, than to his chagrin at being obliged to play the part that the Jews had planned for him in this affair.'

So the Sanhedrists have condemned Jesus. In their eyes the case is closed. But if the condemnation was to be effective, it must be pronounced by Pilate. Hence their

<sup>1</sup> *Une province procuratorienne au début de l'empire romain*, p. 118.

efforts to force it from him ; hence also the new form given to the charge. For them the decisive accusations had been the religious ones, blasphemy most of all ; before Pilate, political charges must have the first place.<sup>1</sup>

Accordingly they presented themselves in the morning, not wishing, however, to enter the Pretorium, as to avoid defilement and thus be able to partake of the Passover meal. Pilate knew their scruples and respected them, going out to them instead. From the first word, however, the opposition between the two points of view was clear. Pilate intended to receive from them, not a sentence to ratify, but an accusation to judge. They were indignant at this : ' If He were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered Him up to thee,' they exclaimed, and Pilate replied : ' Take Him you, and judge Him according to your law.' We perceive here all the contempt of the Roman for the Jew. It is the same attitude that would be taken later by the proconsul Gallio at Corinth, when S. Paul had been brought before him by the Jews (Acts xviii, 14-17) :

' If it were some matter of injustice or an heinous deed, O Jews, I should with reason bear with you. But if they be questions of word and names and of your law, look you to it. I will not be judge of such things. And he drove them from the judgement seat. And all laying hold on Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, beat him before the judgement seat. And Gallio cared for none of those things.'

<sup>1</sup> Attempts have been made to throw light on criminal procedure in the Roman Provinces (of which we know so little) by the evidence of the Egyptian papyri : Danby, *J.T.S.* (October, 1919), 58, and R. W. Husband, *The Prosecution of Jesus* (Princeton, 1916).

In Egypt there were three distinct departments for the administration of criminal law : at the head, the prefect, appointed by the emperor ; in each of the three districts, an epistrategus, also appointed by the emperor but responsible to the prefect ; in each nome a strategus, who seems to have been a native magistrate. The prefect made a periodic visit of the different nomes, and there administered justice ; the arrangement for the trial being made before his arrival in the place. The less important cases were tried by the local authorities ; the most serious, by the prefect. If this system be applied to Judea it will be admitted that the Jewish authorities had power of arrest and investigation ; that it was within their province to deal with the less serious cases, referring the others to the procurator himself.

This scheme applies well enough to the trial of our Lord, except only that here the Jews were not content with their rôle of magistrate-inquisitors ; they acted as if it were within their power to conduct a definitive and irrevocable trial, and determined to avail themselves of the weapons of the law in order to give effect to their sentence by bringing it before the governor's court.

It was the same detached and haughty attitude that Pilate wished to adopt, but the Jews would have none of it. What they wanted was not simply to ill-treat Jesus, to beat Him before the tribunal like Sosthenes at Corinth, but to put Him to death. And that they could not do. 'It is not lawful for us to put any man to death.'

S. John sees here a fulfilment of a divine plan, already made known by our Lord. If Jesus had been put to death by the Jews, He would have suffered stoning like Stephen. By handing Him over to the Romans, the Jews were delivering Him up to the punishment of the Cross, a frightful one, no doubt, but chosen by Himself. He would not fall under stones and blows in the violent death of stoning. He would die amidst atrocious sufferings, but from the height of His Cross dominating the world that contemplated His agony; the world that He would draw to Himself, raised like the brazen serpent between heaven and earth.

Faced with this determination, Pilate could not do otherwise than order a trial. Certainly, Jesus was not unknown to him. He was already in office as procurator when Christ began to preach; and this ministry could not have gone on for two years throughout the length and breadth of Palestine without inquiry being made into the matter by so suspicious an official as we know Pilate to have been. Even without previous information, the events of the last few days would have been sufficient to put him on his guard. The triumphal entry on Palm Sunday and, since then, the daily disputes with the Pharisees in the Temple must have attracted the attention of the most negligent police, and the Roman police were not that. From the beginning of the trial, therefore, Pilate knew what line to take about the Accused and those by whom He was arraigned: Matthew (xxvii, 18) and Mark (xv, 10) tell us that 'he knew that for envy they had delivered Him.' This conviction must have been confirmed by the trial itself; but it was certainly anterior to it, and this is the explanation of Pilate's attitude in the situation that had arisen. He saw perfectly clearly that the Man brought to him was not a political agitator, and that all the charges brought against Him were only pretexts to wring from himself that condemnation that envy claimed.<sup>1</sup> But, it may be asked, if Pilate was convinced

<sup>1</sup> Pilate's conviction on this point is for us a precious piece of evidence indeed. It is the most decisive confirmation of everything we know

of Christ's innocence, why did he allow himself to be drawn by the Jews, first into such unworthy subterfuges and then into a condemnation itself? Manifestly this was through fear of an appeal to Rome. To release Jesus without inquiry would seem to show a carelessness about the public order, disturbed by messianic pretensions at the time. To dismiss Him, once accusations on religious grounds had been raised by the Jews, would seem to tolerate the violation of their law, which Rome, and Tiberius in particular, made a point of treating with respect. No doubt this fear on Pilate's part was a great crime, but human weakness makes it only too easy to understand, especially in the case of a man to whom the life of a Jew was a thing of such little account.

Jesus was already in the Pretorium, and Pilate had Him called. The examination that followed took place apart from the Jews, whom religious scruples kept outside.

'Art Thou the King of the Jews?' Pilate's opening question is found not only in John but also in the three Synoptics, who scarcely preserve any other incident of this interrogation on Pilate's part. This, indeed, was the capital point that Pilate had to make clear; it was the one charge that he retained and had affixed to the head of the cross: 'Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.' In this he was really indicating the messianic claims with which the Jews reproached our Lord. No doubt it was the first charge they brought, and they returned to it again at the end, to wring from Pilate the condemnation that he refused.

Before replying directly, our Lord tried to induce Pilate to state his accusation in more precise terms. Did he say this on his own initiative, or had he heard it from others? It was a first attempt to arouse the interest of the judge, and to bring him, little by little, if that were possible, to realize the true nature of the sentence he was about to pass, by giving some idea of the dignity of Him who was to be judged.

On this effort fell the full force of Pilate's disdain: 'Am I a Jew? Thy own nation and the chief priests have

already of Christ's ministry and its purely religious character. If in such turbulent times so suspicious a Roman governor found in our Lord's activities nothing to justify His prosecution, it was indeed because there was nothing that could have given rise to the slightest suspicion. To appreciate the significance of this restraint on Pilate's part we might well call to mind what we know of the bloody persecution of the pilgrims of Mount Gerizim, to which we have referred above.

delivered Thee up to me. What hast Thou done?' We find here in Pilate the same contempt that we saw just now in Gallio for the verbal disputes so dear to the Jewish mind. It was simply to mock him, he thought, to suppose that he took the slightest personal interest in the Jews and their king. 'Let us come to facts,' he seems to say. 'They have delivered Thee to me. What hast Thou done?'

So Jesus returned to the question put by Pilate, making it clear to him in a word that he had nothing to fear from His claims: 'My kingdom is not of this world,' and giving as His proof that otherwise His servants would defend Him, while manifestly there was not the slightest attempt at resistance of any kind.

Here again, in our Lord's reply there was more than a simple justification of His conduct. There was an attempt to draw Pilate on to higher ground—a vain effort, like the previous one. But all that interested the governor in our Lord's words was an avowal which did not seem to him quite clear, and upon which, therefore, he insisted: 'Art Thou a king, then?' And we have our Lord's answer: 'Thou sayest that I am a king.' It was the same form of reply that He had already used before Caiphas.<sup>1</sup>

In both these cases Jesus gives due testimony on His Person and Mission—testimony that was to be consecrated by His death. To the Jews He recalled to mind a prophetic oracle: '... You shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of the power of God and coming in the clouds of heaven'; while with the heathen judge He strove to arouse the voice of conscience, and the instincts of the soul, naturally Christian, which carries it towards the truth: 'For this was I born, and for this came I into the world; that I should give testimony to the truth. Everyone that is of the truth heareth My voice.' Here there was no question of the second coming, for which Pilate did not look, and which could have no meaning for him. Our Lord referred to His own coming into the world.

Here, especially, we are conscious of the effort our Blessed Lord was making to lay hold of this soul through the attraction of truth, so powerful in every human heart. In most of

<sup>1</sup> This form of reply is very rare in the Old Testament and the Hebrew of the Talmud; it has been compared to Exod. x, 29, and to a text in *Baba Qamma*, I, 6; Dalman, *Die Worte Jesu*, I, 254; Billerbeck, I, 990; Abrahams, *Studies in Pharisaism*, II, pp. 1-3. The sense is affirmative.

the authentic Acts of the martyrs, we find in these confessors of Christ the same anxiety to enlighten and, if possible, to save the magistrate before whom they stood. So Carpus, having explained the faith in the true God and the folly of idolatry, went on to say : ' Believe me, Sir, your worship is vain indeed.' Again, Pothinus, when asked who was the God of the Christians, replied : ' You will know Him, if you are worthy of Him.' And once more, to the proconsul Perennius, Apollonius the martyr addressed the following earnest words : ' I grieve to see you so blind before the beauties of grace. The Lord's word, Perennius, belongs to the heart that sees, as the light to the eyes that see. It is of no more use to speak to the foolish, than to try to give light to the blind.' Preoccupied much less by the death that threatened them than by the blindness of which they were witnesses, they made every effort to rescue from it those by whom their own death was decreed. And in that they were but imitating their Master, the faithful Witness, the martyrs' King. This last effort failed like the others. ' What is truth ? ' We need not see in Pilate's words the anguish of a man who despaired of ever reaching the truth of which he spoke ; but merely the sceptical jest of an official who was plagued by such ideology and wished to relieve himself of a barren interview. At least he had heard enough to convince him more than ever that this ' king of the Jews ' who had been brought to him by the chief priests was not a danger to public peace ; He was a dreamer, rather. So he went out once more, and told the Jews : ' I find no cause in Him.' .

But Christ's enemies were not to be so easily disarmed. Frenzied with rage, they piled up political charges against Him. He was a seditious person who stirred up the people and opposed the paying of tribute to Cæsar. Christ was there, hearing all, and saying nothing. He was silent as He had been before Caiphas, and would be before Herod. In all these questionings He spoke only to give testimony and to make known the truth. This duty fulfilled, He said no more.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jerome, *In Matt.*, xxvii, 13, writes : ' *Nihil respondere voluit, ne crimen diluens a præside dimitteretur, et crucis utilitas differetur.*' Lagrange : ' From this moment everything was in the hands of His Father ; He had accepted death ; it did not befit Him to take sides against the rulers of His people before a foreign tribunal.'



The bad faith of those who thus accused Him is manifest. Leaving out the true motive of their pursuit, they hurled against Jesus charges in which they could not have believed themselves, and which at the slightest investigation would have fallen to the ground. So, for instance, with the question of tribute to Cæsar. Our Lord's reply in that matter was only a week old, and all Jerusalem knew it : 'Render, therefore, to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's ; and to God, the things that are God's.' It was for Pilate to put them right, if he wished to ; Jesus had nothing to say.

However, the Jews went on (Luke xxiii, 5) : 'He stirreth up the people, teaching through all Judea, beginning from Galilee to this place.' In thus mentioning Galilee, the classic land of revolt, the Jews thought to lend plausibility to their charges, but Pilate saw in the reference only a means of escape from the embarrassment in which he was placed. Galilee was Herod's domain, and Herod was in Jerusalem. Pilate would take advantage of the fact to refer this vexatious case to him, with instructions, if not to decide it to examine it, at least.

#### V. *Jesus before Herod.*<sup>1</sup>

Pilate's purpose in sending Jesus on to Herod is easy to understand. He wished to shift the responsibility of a

<sup>1</sup> This episode is related only by Luke (xxiii, 4-12), and has long been suspect to the critics. Strauss, Renan, Keim, and many others, approaching the question from very different points of view, all come to the same conclusion, set forth by Loisy in *Evang. Synopt.*, II, 638-40. This agreement has impressed a number of scholars who cannot be accounted of the liberal school ; for instance, Verrall, *J.T.S.*, April 1909, 321-53, *Christ before Herod*. Our Lord's silence and the accusations of the priests might be reproduced in both tribunals without arousing suspicion ; but not so, he says, with the mockery scene ; that before Herod, as before Pilate, the soldiers should have mocked Christ, that the theme of their raillery should in both cases have been the title King of the Jews, that in both scenes their derision should have been expressed in a travesty of investiture, is altogether a matter for surprise. If, furthermore, the evangelist who describes all these things as happening before Herod, leaves them out as occurring before Pilate, we are led to wonder whether there is not some misunderstanding here. To dissipate all these suspicions, at the same time accepting and upholding the appearance before Herod, which seems to him amply attested, Verrall cuts out of this narrative everything that properly speaking could be called mockery, derision or travesty. We shall see shortly what must be thought of this correction.

We must first consider this episode in its entirety, and at this point an observation is necessary : not only in his account of the Passion, but in his whole gospel, Luke gives us more information about Herod than do the other evangelists : cp. Headlam, art. *Herod*, D.B., II, 358b. Luke

troublesome matter on to the shoulders of that prince. At the same time he saw in his proposed action a deferential gesture which might improve the relations existing between the tetrarch and himself.<sup>1</sup>

The Gospel, however, does not tell us that Jesus was sent to Herod for final judgement, nor does this seem very likely in itself. We shall understand the whole proceeding better if we consider this new appearance in court of our Lord as an

alone tells us of this characteristic incident (xiii, 31): 'The same day there came some of the Pharisees, saying to Him: Depart and get Thee hence, for Herod hath a mind to kill Thee. And He said to them: Go, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I am consummated. Nevertheless, I must walk to-day and to-morrow and the day following, because it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.' Again, higher up (ix, 9); 'And Herod said: John I have beheaded; but who is this of whom I hear such things? And he sought to see Him.' These passages are admirably in harmony with the narrative of the Passion. But according to Loisy (639), this very harmony is suspect. 'We are prepared for Herod's intervention a long time beforehand. Luke says first of all that the tetrarch desired to see Jesus; then, that he intended to bring about His death, and that in this last circumstance, Jesus had charged the Pharisees, who told Him of it, to warn Herod that a prophet might not perish elsewhere than in Jerusalem. All this is connected in the evangelist's mind with the incident here described. But it is hardly likely that Luke himself worked out these approximations. He found them ready-made in one or more documents, in which what passed between Antipas and Jesus had been described.' The last lines of this quotation contradict the supposition laid down in the first. Luke's purpose in relating the first incidents was not to prepare us for Herod's intervention in the Passion; he did no more than describe what passed between Antipas and Jesus, as he found it recorded in the documents of which he made use. It is possible to trace probable, if not certain, indications of Luke's real source. For many years Luke's mention of Joanna, wife of Chusa, Herod's steward (viii, 3), has been remarked upon; and he alone names her among the women whom Jesus had delivered from evil spirits, and who helped Him with their resources; we may believe that through her Luke gathered information about the court of Herod that had dropped out of the first Christian catechesis. It should be added that this appearance in court before Herod, as we see it, was doubtless quite unofficial, and must have taken place before a very few witnesses.

This preliminary discussion may be concluded by mentioning that passage in the Acts which speaks of the part played by Herod in comparison with that of Pilate: Peter and John, released by the Sanhedrin, are come back among the faithful. All pray together (iv, 27): 'For of a truth there assembled together in this city, against Thy holy child Jesus, whom Thou hast anointed, Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, to do what Thy hand and Thy counsel decreed to be done.' Cp. Kastner, *Jesus vor Pilatus*, pp. 69-78.

<sup>1</sup> It may be asked if Herod was competent to judge Jesus. Regnault thus refutes the argument of Rosadi (242): 'Either the cause of Jesus was a religious one and so within the jurisdiction of the great Sanhedrin alone; or it was political, and, if Pilate was not competent to deal with it, should have been referred, not to Herod, who had no jurisdiction over it, but to his colleague, the vice-governor of Galilee.' No such vice-governor existed. In Galilee Herod possessed the powers that Archelaus had enjoyed

examination of a supplementary kind.<sup>1</sup> 'He stirreth up the people from Galilee to this place.' This new charge, brought by the Jews, supplied the motive for a new inquiry. It was not enough to investigate Jesus' words and actions in Jerusalem during the last few days, but also what they had been in Palestine as a whole, and particularly in Galilee, since it was there, especially, that He had worked and preached. For such an inquiry, none more suitable than the tetrarch could be found. He was in Jerusalem, and so he could be charged with the affair. Pilate was not going to ask him to settle the case, but to examine it. This, no doubt, would not be an official procedure, but, for the procurator, it would be a source of useful information, while the tetrarch would see in such a step a mark of confidence and respect.

Herod lent himself very willingly to Pilate's wish. He was flattered by the courtesy, of a kind, no doubt, to which the Romans had done little to accustom him. Above all, he saw in this appearance in court an unexpected opportunity of satisfying the curiosity that he felt: 'he was desirous of a long time to see Him, because he had heard many things of Him; and he hoped to see some sign wrought by Him.' And indeed this desire dated a long way back; when Jesus was preaching in Galilee he had already

in Judea, and retained them until he was deposed in 39; but he had no jurisdiction outside Galilee: 'If Herod had no jurisdiction, it was for the simple reason that he was officially outside his own jurisdiction; once outside Galilee and Perea, he was just a private individual, a stranger of somewhat high rank and dignity perhaps, but possessing no power in Jerusalem whatever. Even granting that Herod had the power to judge Jesus, he could have had no concern with the matter elsewhere than in his tetrarchy. His presence in Jerusalem might make it materially easier for Jesus to appear before him, but constitutionally it prevented him from deciding the case.'

Le Camus among others thought he had found an indubitable precedent in an incident described by Josephus (B.J., III, x, 540-2). Josephus describes the disposal of the captives: 'The rest of the multitude, to the number of thirty thousand four hundred heads, was sold by auction, except those Vespasian presented to Agrippa, namely the native Jews of his kingdom; the general let him dispose of them at his discretion, and the king in his turn sold them. The bulk of this crowd were natives of Trachonitis, of Gaulanitis, of Hippos, and of Gadara for the most part: a mob of the seditious and outlawed, who, despised and scorned in time of peace, had contrived in their infamy the means to stir up war.' This is obviously quite different from what is described in the Gospel: here there is no question of competence; the Galileans sent by Vespasian to Agrippa were not passed on to his tribunal, but abandoned to his good pleasure. These were prisoners of war, already looked upon as slaves, and a group of them was delivered to the prince. On the contrary, Jesus was a dependant whose fate was as yet undecided, and Pilate sent Him to Herod.

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Verrall, *art. cit.*, p. 332.

said : ' John I have beheaded. But who is this of whom I hear such things ? And he sought to see Him ' (Luke ix, 9). Up to then, Jesus had not lent Himself to these wishes ; He had kept the tetrarch at a distance and spoken of him without reserve as a ' fox ' (Luke xiii, 31). Now Herod had Him at his mercy ; on the inquiry he was about to make, our Lord's life and death might depend ; and from all this it would surely follow that the Prophet would be ready to comply with all his desires.

If, in this matter, Herod should displease the Jews, he did not care very much for that ; for all these Sanhedrists, who were dragging Christ to his tribunal, he had the same contempt as his father Herod had. A monarch, Greek as much as Jewish, he had taken for his capital that Tiberias which he had built on ground that every Jew held to be defiled, and there, or at Macheron in Perea, he usually lived, outside the sphere of influence of the Jewish authorities, and caring little for their anathemas. In fact he had no need even to take, with them, the same precautions as Pilate ; the procurator was often in Jerusalem, in contact with the heads of the Jewish race ; Herod only encountered them occasionally, and could offend them without danger to himself.

So as soon as he saw Jesus, he greeted him with a string of questions, but without receiving any reply. However, the Pharisees pressed their charges with violence ; they were as much annoyed by the contempt of the tetrarch as by the superciliousness of Pilate ; but the worst insults were a matter of indifference to them, provided they could get from him the condemnation which was the object of their pursuit.

In the midst of this contest, impassioned and confused, Jesus kept silence ; He had replied to Caiphas and Pilate ; to Herod He had nothing to say. Throughout His Passion He defended Himself only in the strict measure that obedience to legitimate authority required. The High Priest, adjuring Him in the name of God, had the right to an answer, and received it ; the Roman procurator enjoyed a legitimate authority, possessing the right of inquiry and judgement ; and to him also Jesus replied. Herod had no rights in the matter at all ; his examination was merely directed to satisfying his haughty curiosity ; and to him Jesus said not a word. He might have pleaded for His life, and He would seem to have had a good chance of success,

but 'the chalice which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?' And to this general reason, which governed His whole attitude during that day, were added motives of a particularly pressing kind. The prince before whom He stood was the man responsible for John the Baptist's imprisonment and death. He had had him arrested, but all the time that he was his gaoler, he was susceptible to his influence. Thus he played the double role of tyrant and *dilettante*, until at last a woman's cruelty carried him away and obtained the prophet's death at his hands. And he wished to deal with Christ in the same way, pleasing his curiosity by listening to Him, and then casting Him aside, like a plaything of which he was tired. But Jesus would be no party to these wretched schemes: it was not His practice to cast pearls before swine.

The lesson of our Lord's silence was not lost on Herod and, in revenge, he had recourse to mockery—his weapon of choice. Verrall, as we have said, will not allow the presence of any hostile intention on Herod's part. His interpretation of the incident is as follows. 'Herod judged the Man to be of no importance and—with his soldiers—amused himself at His expense; he gave Him a fine robe and sent Him back to Pilate' (p. 345). All the more then we are confronted with an attitude of contemptuous frivolity; but the Gospel goes much further than that; the prince felt himself despised and was taking his revenge. But the particular insult he devised would, at the same time, hit both Jesus and the Jews. By clothing Him with a 'white garment' he presented Him to the Jews as their king. No doubt it was a satisfaction to the tetrarch to make sport of all his enemies at the same time, and to dismiss them all with equal contempt. This interpretation in no way makes improbable the subsequent mockery before Pilate; quite the contrary. We can imagine with great likelihood that our Lord's return thus derisively apparelled would have inspired the raillery of the Roman soldiers; a king of the Jews had been sent back to them; well, they would treat Him as such.

Thus were intensified the outrages which Jesus had suffered from the beginning of His Passion, and which would cease only with His death; cruelties and insults broke over Him, becoming even more brutal as He went from court to court. Men, alas, lend themselves to such cruel sport, and

the Acts of the Martyrs are full of them ; but here, behind his wretched instruments, Christian faith perceives the Enemy whose hour it is, and who is raging over the Victim now within his power. And Christ on His part accepts all this insult and brutality, knowing that thereby He is redeeming us from sensuality and pride.<sup>1</sup>

This whole incident was probably witnessed only by a few, and is therefore passed over in silence by the other Synoptics. Jesus had been accompanied to Herod's house only by a few guards, and by a few accusers and witnesses as well. He is sent back to Pilate, and the official examination is about to be resumed.

### VI. *Jesus before Pilate.*

Pilate had not derived from his scheme all the advantage for which he had looked. Herod had sent back to him the Accused without having in any degree released the procurator from the responsibility that was his. However, the step taken had been a mark of deference ; at least, it had been received as such, and the two rivals had become friends. Further, both had taken the same view of the affair ; the Accused was only a poor man of no importance, at whom no one could take offence. His accusers were moved by envy and worthy of all contempt. But if they were contemptible, the Jews were to be dreaded, too, and as a matter of fact Pilate did dread them. Burdened once more with the tiresome responsibility of judgement, he thought of a pardon as a possible way of escape.

All four evangelists<sup>2</sup> record Pilate's new expedient—a worse one than that which preceded it. In sending Jesus to Herod, the Roman procurator had tried to shelter himself behind the responsibility of the tetrarch. Now, in offering an act of clemency to the people, he presented our Lord as a condemned man who deserved punishment, but could be pardoned on the occasion of the feast. But before reaching this point, S. Luke tells us that he outlined a new defence :  
' . . . I . . . find no cause in this man . . . no, nor Herod

<sup>1</sup> Verrall is of the opinion that this fine garment given to Jesus by Herod was worn by Him up to the hour of Calvary, and that this must have been the seamless garment for which the soldiers cast lots.

This is quite likely ; in any case, we may be certain that the mockery of which this was the beginning followed Him even to His death.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xxvii, 15-26 ; Mark xv, 6-15 ; Luke xxiii, 14-25 ; John xviii, 38-40.

either. . . . I will chastise Him therefore and release Him.' To avoid offending the susceptibilities of the Jews, Pilate dare not plead the complete innocence of our Lord; he admitted that He ought to be chastised, and promised that it should be done. But this half-measure in no way assuaged the hatred of Christ's enemies, a fact which Pilate perceived at once. It was then that he had recourse to the pitiable expedient of the pardon to which we have just referred.

According to Mark (xv, 8) it would seem that this idea was suggested to the procurator by an overture on the part of the mob itself. Going up to the Pretorium they claimed the application of the right of pardon that Pilate possessed, so that there was no need for him to invent a fresh expedient, and he simply seized the opportunity offered him by this step on the part of the Jews.<sup>1</sup>

In this matter of Pilate's action there are slight differences of stress and colour in the Gospel accounts. According to Matthew, the procurator formally proposed the choice between Barabbas and Christ. 'Whether will you of the two be released unto you?' In Mark and John he contents himself with suggesting the pardon of our Lord. 'Will you that I release to you the King of the Jews?' The restraint here implied would seem to show greater skill in dealing with the situation; all the same, the title 'King of the Jews' given to the Accused might appear to be an insult, and have an irritating effect on the mob. To the question put by the procurator, the Jews did not reply immediately; there seeming to be a moment of hesitation among them; meanwhile Pilate waits.

According to Matthew, it was then that there came the

<sup>1</sup> One point in this incident was for a long time obscure; namely, as to what was this right of pardon appealed to by the populace and put into operation by Pilate. Loisy sees here just a legend with no historical reality behind it (*Evang. Syn.*, II, 642): 'According to a custom recorded only in the Gospels, for whose antiquity or even authenticity we have no other guarantee, the populace at every Paschal-time enjoyed the privilege of a prisoner's release. This custom must have been of Jewish origin—its connection with the Passover could not have been simply a coincidence—and the liberation of a prisoner would doubtless have been a commemoration of the deliverance of Israel by the Lord from the servitude of Egypt. Still, we must confess that Mark's statement looks much more like a popular legend than the record of a juridical fact.' A recently published papyrus comes to our aid in throwing light upon this point of the Gospel history; it is quoted by Lagrange (*S. Marc*, p. 413): 'A papyrus (*Papiri greco-egizii*, No. 61, published by G. Vitelli) of the years A.D. 86-8 is the official report of an audience of C. Septimius Vegetus, prefect of Egypt. Apparently a certain Phibion, one of those persons who came up before

incident of the intervention of Pilate's wife. 'And as he was sitting in the place of judgement, his wife sent to him, saying : Have thou nothing to do with that just Man ; for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of Him.'<sup>1</sup>

This episode helps us to understand better Pilate's attitude, and his efforts to save our Lord. No doubt from the beginning he had satisfied himself that the Man brought to him was innocent, and that His persecutors were jealous of the influence He had acquired ; but this opinion would probably not have been sufficient to inspire so long a resistance to their demands. An alien's life was a small matter to a pagan, and especially to a man like Pilate ; and then there were the risks he ran in displeasing the leaders of the Jews ! But it all becomes easier to understand if, in Pilate's mind, regard for justice was mingled with religious fear. In the life of the Romans, dreams played a decisive part, and their influence became still greater in the

his tribunal, had tried to obtain justice by seizing his adversary and the women of his household. The prefect declared that on this head he deserved scourging ; but, he added, I pardon you in deference to the mob. . . . And although the sentence is certainly very puzzling, the remission of the penalty in deference to the people cannot be doubted.'

Regnault, in his thesis, discusses at length the procedure adopted by Pilate. Following Merkel, he distinguishes between two forms of judicial pardon : the *abolitio* and the *indulgentia* (129). The *abolitio* is the annulment of the prosecution ; the plaintiff may avail himself of it by asking the judge to consider the action null and void ; or it can be granted by the recognized authority for a whole list of offences, in the event, for example, of a victory, or on an anniversary, or on a feast day. The prosecution is abandoned, but may be taken up again later on. The *indulgentia*, on the contrary, is a definite pardon ; it is in order after the condemnation has been pronounced, and definitely prevents it from being carried into effect. We see, in a letter from Pliny to Trajan (X, 40, 41), that a number of prisoners condemned to the mines had been pardoned : 'Erant tamen qui dicerent, deprecantes iussu proconsulum legatorumve dimissos.' And Pliny ends by saying : 'Another thing strengthens my faith in their word : I cannot yet believe they would have dared to do it without authority.' From this, Regnault concludes that certain governors had the right of pardon : 'Perhaps, to return to Pilate, we might possibly conceive in his person a delegation of the right of pardon from the Emperor, not necessarily with any reference to a definitely established right of *abolitio* or *indulgentia*, but allowing him, by its very uncertainty, to release to the populace whomsoever it clamoured for, before, during or after the trial. In this way they would be shown that, at this festal time, the victor was not without cognizance of the customs of the vanquished.'

<sup>1</sup> This woman, to whom a manuscript of the Gospel of Nicodemus gives the name Procla, is honoured as a saint in the Greek Church. The Gospel of Nicodemus puts in a legendary detail : Pilate describes his wife's dream to the people, and the Pharisees reply : 'Did we not tell you this man was a sorcerer ? You see, he has sent your wife a dream.'



environment of the mysterious East. As for Pilate's wife, we know too little to see with any certainty what her motive was. We may reasonably conjecture that, like many Roman women of her time and class, she was attracted by Oriental faiths and particularly by that of the Jews, which she had come to know better through her stay in Palestine. No doubt she had heard of Jesus ; of His preaching and marvellous works, and of the popular movement that He had called into being from Galilee to Jerusalem itself. She might have known of His arrest the night before, in which the Roman cohort had taken part ; and during the night she had a dream about Him, which she did not describe but which made her suffer very much. From that moment she had only one care, namely to keep herself and her husband out of this troublesome affair. Her immediate aim in the course she took was the security of Pilate, and not the safety of the Accused.

While this episode was in progress, the chief priests were not wasting their time. Mixing, in all directions, with the crowd, they stirred it up against our Lord, and we need not be surprised that they succeeded so well. For a long time the people, especially of Jerusalem, had been divided between the influence of the Pharisees and that of the new Prophet ; and S. John's Gospel enables us to follow the fluctuations of opinion in this regard. For some months now our Lord's followers had been fewer, and had kept quiet, while those of the Pharisees loudly proclaimed Him to be a dangerous man, a seducer, leading the people astray. The events of the last few weeks, and especially the raising of Lazarus, had caused an appreciable revulsion of feeling, which did not, however, go very deep ; this culminated in the Palm Sunday entry into Jerusalem, the triumph of a day. During the following days—days of cavilling and discussion—we feel that the chance had been lost ; Jesus was no longer safe in Jerusalem, and had to retire to Bethania every day, as evening fell. The events of the previous night and of the morning completed the ruin of His popularity with the mob ; He was arrested without resistance as a common malefactor, and His Apostles had either turned against Him or taken refuge in flight. Before Annas, Caiphas, Herod, Pilate, He kept silence or scarcely defended Himself at all ; in fact all the hopes that had rested upon Him collapsed at a single blow. Hence, if He were not the dreamed-of Messiah, who

could He be but the seducer that the leaders of the people had always denounced? These disasters, and the bitterness they produced, would of themselves suffice to explain the change of attitude of the crowd, but, no doubt, in some cases, the element of fear was there as well. Most certainly the Pharisees would carry the day; the strength of their hatred was well known. The Apostles themselves did not dare expose themselves to its blast, and who among Christ's ephemeral disciples would have the courage to brave the violence of these men? So, to atone for their acclamations of a few days since, they redoubled their maledictions now.

When Pilate again asked them: 'Will you that I release to you the King of the Jews?' they cried: 'Not this Man, but Barabbas.' But Pilate insisted still, thinking, perhaps, that it was more the popularity of Barabbas than hatred of Jesus that had inspired their choice. 'What will you then that I do to the King of the Jews?' Once more they cried: 'Crucify Him.' Still Pilate carried on the debate. 'Why, what evil hath He done?' But the shouts only grew louder: 'Crucify Him!'

The trial and failure of these expedients, one after another—now Herod, then Barabbas—had brought home to the crowd the timidity of the procurator; they had him fast and by the same pressure they would draw him on to the end, without reopening a discussion that was henceforth useless. But Pilate had not lost all hope; scourging precedes crucifixion; he would have Jesus scourged, and then try to get some pity out of the Jews. Alas! hatred is not calmed by the sight of blood, and the Jews, who felt themselves already conquerors, would gloat over this new cruelty still more. Once more Jesus was to be the victim of Pilate's weakness; once more He would be overwhelmed by the rage of His foes; and this programme of suffering and shame had been willed and chosen by Him, and by it did He win salvation for our souls.

The scourging is stressed in the predictions of the Passion made by our Lord on His way up to Jerusalem: '... the chief priests and the scribes ... shall deliver up (the Son of Man) to be mocked and scourged and crucified: and the third day He shall rise again' (Matt. xx, 19; Mark x, 34; Luke xviii, 33). Itself a punishment at once degrading and terrible, the scourging was, indeed, one of the most cruel episodes of the Passion.

The punishment of the whip was not unknown to the Jews, but, with them, it was inflicted in a sufficiently merciful form.<sup>1</sup> Quite other was the terrible Roman scourging. The thongs of the whip were furnished with small pieces of bone, or balls of lead, which not only lacerated the flesh but might even break the bones. This infamous punishment came to Rome from the East, and was reserved by law for foreigners and slaves. It could not be applied in the case of Roman citizens,<sup>2</sup> and to avoid it Paul had merely to appeal to his rights as a Roman citizen (Acts xxii, 24, 25). Even certain foreigners were treated less brutally than others.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This is described in the treatise *Makkoth*, III, 12; the whip had three thongs of leather; the criminal received thirteen strokes on the chest and thirteen on each of the shoulders; thus a total of thirty-nine strokes was observed, to make sure of being on the right side of the law, which forbade more than forty strokes, lest the sufferer should be torn to pieces by the whip. This punishment was inflicted five times on S. Paul in the Jewish synagogue (2 Cor. xi, 24).

<sup>2</sup> Cic. *Rab.* 4: '*Porcia lex virgas ab omnium civium corpore amovit; hic misericors flagella retulit.*'

<sup>3</sup> In his treatise against Flaccus, Philo thus describes the tortures inflicted upon the Jews at Alexandria:

'In the city, distinction is made in scourging, according to the status of the person chastised: the Egyptians are not whipped like the others, and the Alexandrians are scourged by the lictors of Alexandria, who are called spathephores. The presidents, predecessors of Flaccus, and Flaccus himself, in the earlier days, had kept to this custom in dealing with us; and it is undoubtedly some mitigation of infamy, some alleviation of torture, when things go on in accordance with the law, and punishment is not maliciously refined. But it was the last word in iniquity, at the time when the Jews received punishment for their misdeeds as citizens of Alexandria, to see magistrates and senators, whose age and title made them worthy of some respect, treated with less regard than their subordinates, and cruelly whipped, as if they were the vilest Egyptians making just expiation for their crimes. . . . Under the presidents, who do not overstep the law, and honour their benefactors (the Emperors), it is a custom not to punish criminals until after the celebration of the feasts which take place on the anniversaries of the deaths of the Emperors. . . . I remember seeing the bodies of the crucified being taken down at the approach of these feasts and handed over to their relatives to be buried. . . . Far from having the crucified taken down from their cross, Flaccus crucified the living, for whom the circumstance of the time brought not, indeed, pardon, but merely respite. Before thus crucifying them, he did not forget to have them scourged in the middle of the arena, and put through the torture of iron and fire. The order of entertainment was as follows: From morning to about the third or fourth hour the Jews were scourged, hung up, tortured by the wheel, brought up for trial, and then led across the orchestra for execution' (*In Flaccum*, X, 78, 299; M. II, 528, tr. Delaunay, p. 228).

This text is interesting for several reasons: we notice here not only the various kinds of scourging, but also the custom, frequently attested elsewhere, of preceding the extreme torment of the cross by that of the scourge, and finally of handing over the bodies of the crucified to their relatives, on occasions of great solemnity.

But, in His own punishment, Jesus could not look for any of the mitigations or the consideration of which the Alexandrians or other subjects of Rome could avail themselves. He was only a Jew, and a Galilean at that ; sprung from the people, and to be treated by the Romans as these despised and refractory mountaineers generally were. Further, the executioners would be Syrian soldiers, recruited among the enemies of the Jews, whom they pursued everywhere with their hatred and contempt.

The evangelists are content with a bare mention of this frightful punishment, without any attempt at a description by which no useful purpose could be served. All their readers had seen it inflicted more than once and were familiar with every phase ; the condemned man stripped of his clothes and tied to a low column or post, while on the tightened skin, on back, breast, stomach, eyes and face, the blows rain down. In the authors of the period, we still seem to hear the cries of the judges urging the executioners on : *firme !* (Suet., *Cal.*, 26) ; *adde virgas !* (Livy, xxvi, 16) ; and we read of the body of the victim stretched on the ground, bathed in his own blood (Cicero, *Verr.*, v, 54), writhing with pain (Plut., *Coriol.*, 24), often expiring on the spot (*Verr.*, iii, 29 ; iv, 39 ; v, 54). Thus was treated the Son of God.

At the end the soldiers raised Him, restored His clothes, and then, before this Jew, this royal claimant, this Messias, gave themselves over to the diversion of the moment.

‘ And the soldiers led Him away into the court of the palace : and they called together the whole band. And they clothe Him with purple : and plating a crown of thorns, they put it upon Him. And they began to salute Him : Hail, King of the Jews. And they struck His head with a reed : and they did spit on Him. And bowing their knees, they adored Him. And after they had mocked Him, they took off the purple from Him and put His own garments on Him.’<sup>1</sup>

This scene of derision, too, had been foreseen and foretold by our Lord (Mark x, 33) : ‘ they shall . . . deliver Him to the Gentiles : and they shall mock Him, and spit on Him, and scourge Him, and kill Him.’ This infamous treatment of a condemned man without defence has justly revolted

<sup>1</sup> Mark xv, 16–20. Cp. Matt. xxvii, 27–31 ; John xix, 2, 3.

the readers of the Gospel. By way of explanation Origen (P.G., XIII, 1775) writes : ' It is probable that the soldiers, on account of the recent accession of a new emperor, were still in a disorderly state, and therefore, contrary to the discipline now in force, acted as they did, making a plaything of our Lord, and taking advantage of His title " King of the Jews." But, for my part, I believe that the soldiers acted as they did at the instigation of the invisible kings, the princes of this world, leagued against the Lord and His Christ. Thus the pretorian cohort represented the hosts of evil. . . . ' This explanation has its value, but we must recognize that the soldiers and lictors were often pitiless to their victims, and loved to make a sport of them. Thus Cicero (*Verr.*, v, 54, 142) describes the punishment of a Roman citizen, Servilius, whom Verres had scourged by six of the strongest and most skilful lictors at his command. At the end, one of them, Sextius, reversed his whip and struck the unfortunate man in the eyes with the handle and he fell, face and eyes covered with blood. In our Lord's case, too, as we have already said, the executioners were the enemies of the Jews, and it was a piece of luck for them to be able with impunity to torture and mock this ' King of the Jews.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A good many examples of this hatred are set down by Josephus : thus, for instance, under the procurator Cumanus, a revolt suddenly broke out in the Temple, during the celebrations of the Passover, through some indecent joke on the part of a soldier who had been jeering at the Jews (B.J., II, xii, 1) : some time later, under the same procurator, a soldier, finding a copy of the Law, tore it to pieces and threw it in the fire (229). Other examples are to be found (B.J., V, xi, 1 ; A.J., XIX, ix, 1). The special form taken by the insults of the soldiers was put into their heads by the military ceremony of saluting the Emperor : Ave, Cæsar Auguste (Martial, *Epig.*, XIV, lxxi, 2) ; these passages are mentioned by Keim, III, p. 393, n. 1, and 394, n. 1. More probably still, Philo describes a sufficiently similar scene of mockery which occurred in Alexandria when King Agrippa was passing through the city :

' There was in Alexandria a fool called Karabas . . . this wretch was dragged to the gymnasium, and there set down on a raised seat where he could be seen by all. On his head was placed a large sheet of paper like a diadem, and round his body was wound a huge mat by way of a mantle ; and one of them, noticing a reed by the roadside, picked it up and put it in his hand as a sceptre. Having decorated him in this way with the insignia of royalty, thus transforming him into a mimic king, young men shouldering sticks formed up round him like a guard. Then some came up to salute him, others to demand justice, and others to give him advice on public affairs. The crowd round about loudly acclaimed him, saluting him with the title " Marin," a word which in Syrian is said to signify prince. It was well known to them that Agrippa was of Syrian origin, and that the greater part of his kingdom was in Syria.' (*In Flaccum*, VI, 36 ff.)

It is now two or three centuries since this account of Philo's was brought

The thought of this spectacle, as described for us in the Gospels, fills us with horror and shame. It is a page of history that, for the honour of humanity, we would gladly efface, even with our blood ; but it is too deeply graven in fact for that. It ought, at least, to teach us man's nature, and God's. For the study of the Gospels shows us with what supreme respect Christ treats man. He never conquers, but wins them ; never crushes, but lifts up. His Apostles

to light and compared with the Gospel texts : we must not therefore draw from the comparison more than it has to tell us, namely the delight taken by the Orientals in jeering at the Jews, and, in particular, scoffing at their real or pretended kings. M. S. Reinach (*Orpheus*, p. 337) saw much more in the passage in question and thought he would be justified in using it to reduce the story of Christ's Passion to a misunderstanding. ' . . . The circumstances of the Passion,' he writes, ' have an altogether suspicious resemblance to certain rites celebrated many years before in connection with special feasts. On the feast of the Sacæa in Babylonia and Persia, a condemned criminal was led out in triumph dressed like a king. When the feast was over, his fine clothes were torn off and he was whipped, and finally crucified or hung. We know from Philo that the populace of Alexandria raised Karabas to the dignity of one of these improvised monarchs, and heaped derisory honours upon his head, only to ill-treat him in the end. But Karabas means nothing either in Greek or Aramaic ; we must correct it to Barabas, which in Aramaic means son of the Father. In the Gospels we see Jesus given the title King of the Jews, crowned, and invested with a scarlet robe, while for a sceptre a reed is placed in His hand ; in fact, He is treated exactly like a Barabbas. But then, what is the significance of the story of the seditious Barabbas, and the choice left to the populace between Jesus and him ? In addition to this we find Origen, in about the year 250, reading in a very ancient manuscript of the Gospel of S. Matthew, that Barabbas was called Jesus Barabbas. From this comparison we conclude that Jesus would in all probability have been put to death, not in preference to Barabbas, but in the character of Barabbas. The evangelists understood neither the ceremony they were describing, nor the nature of the mock honours rendered to Jesus ; they have converted what must have been a rite into a myth. If any historical truth lies behind their narrative, it is so smothered in legend that it has become impossible to disengage it.'

The whole of this argument rests upon strangely confused ideas. The Feast of the Sacæa has nothing to do with the story of the Passion ; this feast belonged to the cult of Anaitis (Strabo, II, 8, 5) quoted by Lagrange (*S. Marc*, p. 422). There is no trace of this Pagan cult in the holy city of the Jews. Moreover, the Feast of the Sacæa took place not in the spring, like the Passover, but in July-August. As for the account of Philo, Reinach must have completely forgotten it, to interpret it as he does here. Philo is not describing a rite, occurring at a fixed time of the year, in which it was customary to heap mock honours, followed by ill-treatment, upon an improvised king called Karabas : he merely tells us that in ridicule of Agrippa they seized a fool called Karabas, and treated him as a mock king of Syria. We would add finally that Reinach's last observation has no more point than what has gone before. ' Karabas,' he says, ' means nothing either in Aramaic or Greek, and we must read Barabas.' On the contrary, Karabas is very well attested ; an inscription of Palmyra acquaints us with a woman called Karaba, which word means battle' (Lagrange, *ib.*, 423).

were drawn by Him from nothing, and brought slowly and patiently to the loftiest heights of the moral life. So does God treat those whose Master He is. And here we see the other side of the picture—how man treats God when he has, or thinks he has, Him within his power ; cruelties, mockery, derision—he heaps upon Him everything that can bring physical and mental pain. And God lets him do it, for He bears within Him such a treasure of life and glory that by His death He can bring life to the world, and glorify it by His shame.

### *VII. Condemnation. Crucifixion. Death.*

As the drama proceeded, passions rose to a higher pitch, and since early morning the Jews had been raging for their prey. In vain had Pilate multiplied expedients by which to snatch Jesus from their hands ; his scheming and his cruelty did nothing but stir up their insolence still more. The scourging and crowning with thorns had taken place inside the Pretorium ; but now Pilate brought Jesus out and presented Him to the crowd.<sup>1</sup>

And our Lord appeared, covered with blood, disfigured, dressed up in a soldier's cloak, and wearing a crown of thorns. 'Behold the Man,' said Pilate, with a mixture of pity and contempt. Had He not been punished enough ? What could they fear from Him any more ? But the Pharisees were not so easily pleased : 'Crucify Him, crucify Him !' they cried, with a hatred that their first successes had only served to increase. And Pilate, losing heart before their stubborn rage, answered : 'Take Him you, and crucify Him : for I find no cause in Him.' The permission thus grudgingly given provided only a moderate guarantee for Christ's enemies, with which they were by no means content. Taking advantage of the feast, the Galileans might still attempt some movement to save their Prophet ; above all, in the future they might avenge the crime. To secure themselves, the Pharisees wished to be protected by the authority of Rome, and they saw well enough that its representative

<sup>1</sup> These last efforts of Pilate and his final capitulation are related by S. John (xix, 4-16). S. Matthew adds one detail, that of Pilate washing his hands with the words : 'I am innocent of the blood of this just Man' ; to which all the people reply : 'His blood be upon us and upon our children' (Matt. xxvii, 24).

was so feeble and shaken that he would not resist a new assault. So they brought forward a new charge. They had a law, recognized and protected by Rome, and Jesus had broken it by calling Himself the Son of God. Thus the character of the accusation was changed. Up to then it had been purely political, representing Jesus as a seditious person ; now it becomes religious. Jesus is a blasphemer, who violates the law by His claims to be the Son of God.

This new method of procedure would seem to have been quite in order. The Jewish law was, as a matter of fact, protected by the Roman authority, which punished its transgressors. Thus the Roman soldier who had torn up and burnt a copy of the Law, having been denounced by the Jews, had been condemned and put to death. The history of S. Paul, too, shows us how the sanctity of the Temple was protected by the Roman authorities, and to bring pagans into the enclosure reserved to the Jews was a crime habitually punished by them. It cannot therefore be doubted that teaching blasphemous in character, and injurious to the law, would be punished in the same way. And yet we can see clearly enough that it was with regret that the Pharisees advanced on to the religious ground. Caiphas, shortly before, had only with the greatest reluctance put to Jesus the decisive question : ' Art Thou the Messias, the Son of the Blessed God ? ' and he only did so when the other charges had vanished into thin air. And it is the same now. First, the Jews had sought to snatch a condemnation without inquiry : ' If He were not a malefactor we would not have delivered Him up to thee.' Failing to obtain this, they tried at least to keep on political ground : Christ was a seditious person, stirring up the people, trying to prevent the payment of tribute to Cæsar. This manœuvre having failed, they were reduced to playing their last card : ' He made Himself the Son of God.'

From their point of view this was a grave imprudence, the consequences of which they could themselves foresee. Our Lord's followers, terrorized for the moment, would not fail to recover themselves, when they would certainly want to know the reason for the persecution that their Master had undergone. If Jesus had been condemned as a revolutionary by the Romans, it would have been merely a political condemnation, of which the odium would have



fallen on the procurator alone ; but if He had been condemned as the Messias, the Son of God, it would have been impossible to veil the religious character of the proceedings. Hence those responsible would be the religious heads of the people, the Romans being merely their instruments, and it would have been a terrible responsibility indeed to have stifled all Israel's hopes, through recourse to a foreign and usurping power. S. Paul would say later to the Jews at Rome : ' . . . for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain ' (Acts xxviii, 20). The Sanhedrists felt the full force of these claims, and did not expose themselves to their effects with a light heart.

But in this, like Caiphas, they were led by a will stronger than their own. Almighty God was giving up His Divine Son to death, but He willed that He should be stricken as a martyr and not as a rebel. Later on, S. Peter would say to the Christians to whom he wrote (1 Pet. iv, 15) : ' Let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or a railer, or a coveter of other men's things. But if as a Christian, let him not be ashamed : but let him glorify God in that name.' It was thus that the King of Martyrs was to glorify His Father by His death.

However, this new charge, far from deciding Pilate, only troubled him still more. He knew very little about the Jewish religion, and could scarcely be expected to appreciate the exact force of the term Son of God. But what he knew of Eastern religions in general made him feel that something mysterious and terrible was at hand. From the moment the case had come before him, he felt himself in contact with forces terrifying and obscure. The inveterate hatred of the Jewish religious heads, the simple and majestic silence of the Accused, all seemed to him a confirmation of his wife's warning : ' Have thou nothing to do with that just Man.' The new charge brought forward by the Sanhedrists lent still greater force to these apprehensions. A Son of God ! What if this Man were so, after all !

Without daring directly to face this agonizing question, Pilate asked his Prisoner : ' Whence art Thou ? ' But Jesus answered not a word. He could not explain the mysteries of His origin to this man, so ill-prepared to hear them ; for the rest, Pilate already knew enough for his path of duty to be clearly traced.

The procurator was surprised and irritated at this silence.

He thought he was acting very graciously in deigning to undertake this new examination, and he did not expect to see his advances disregarded by a Man whom he had within his power. He could only think that the Man must be a visionary, with no sense of the risks He ran. 'Speakest Thou not to me? Knowest Thou not that I have power to crucify Thee, and I have power to release Thee?' To the Roman governor, our Lord's reply was to be more disconcerting than His silence. This Man, tortured and half dead, whose life could be terminated by a word from Pilate, cared nothing for His own defence, and was only interested in the responsibility of the judges before whom He stood. Yes, no doubt, Pilate had power over Him, but it was a power that he held from on high, of which he would have to give account. Those who had delivered Jesus into his hands were the depositaries of a power more sacred than his, which they had abused, and their reckoning would be heavier than his. 'Therefore, he that hath delivered Me to thee hath the greater sin.'

Did Pilate grasp the meaning of all this teaching? It is very doubtful. But, at least, he understood enough to feel more keenly the responsibility that, in the event of a condemnation, would be his. And 'from henceforth Pilate sought to release Him.' At the beginning he had made some efforts to save Jesus, but they had been timid and indirect, aimed at securing the desistance of the Jews, or substituting Herod's responsibility for his own. Now he makes a positive attempt to stop the whole affair, and to release our Lord.

But these sincere intentions met a new obstacle, which they could never surmount. 'If thou release this Man thou art not Cæsar's friend. For whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Cæsar.' So the Jews returned to the political charge, but this time they pushed it right home. Cæsar himself was brought into the case, and Pilate understood that, if he resisted, his adversaries would carry the case to Rome. There was a real danger to him there. Acts of violence had marked the beginning of his rule; there had been the affair of the standards, and then of the sacred treasure, and it is quite possible that these high-handed methods had not been altogether approved at Rome. He could still count upon the support of Sejanus (*d.* A.D. 31), but none the less he must not drive those under him to extremes.

‘ Suppose, on the other hand, the Jews had written to the Emperor to the following effect : We had secured a Man who had risen against you, and your representative had refused to judge Him under the pretext that he had not arrested Him himself, it is probable that, once more, they would have put Pilate in bad odour. Unfortunately for himself as for Jesus, from his experience of the Jews, Pilate quickly gauged the danger of the revolution whose first mutterings he heard on every hand, envisaging the great mass of native Jews swelled by their co-religionists come from all parts of the empire to keep the Pasch in the Holy City, and the secret support of the priests and elders of the people. . . . So Pilate first found himself powerless to protest, and was then compelled by the force of circumstances to deliver Jesus to destruction, whose innocence he acknowledged and whom he wished to set free.’<sup>1</sup>

So Pilate left the Pretorium, had Jesus brought out, and sat down at his tribunal to pass sentence on the Accused. At the sight of the Prisoner and His judge, the Jews once more uttered a cry of hatred, but this time in a more imperative and decisive tone. ‘ Away with Him, away with Him : crucify Him.’ Pilate dare not resist any longer, but by a last bit of irony he tried to avenge his defeat. ‘ Shall I crucify your King ? ’ The Jews, with their prey at last in their hands, forgot everything else and, to gratify with hate, gave the lie to all their cherished hopes : ‘ We have no king but Cæsar.’ The procurator heard this cry of servility and hatred. If at the beginning of this affair he had doubts as to the motives of the Pharisees, he had none now. Never had he so heartily despised the Jews. He made no further effort to snatch from them their prey, but he intended to dissociate himself from the responsibility for what was taking place. The ever-growing tumult drowned his voice, so he had recourse to a symbolic action familiar to Jews and pagans alike ;<sup>2</sup> causing water to be brought, he

<sup>1</sup> Regnault, *loc. cit.*, p. 122.

<sup>2</sup> Thus in Deut. xxi, 1-8, we read : ‘ When there shall be found in the land, which the Lord thy God will give thee, the corpse of a man slain, and it is not known who is guilty of the murder : thy ancients and judges shall go out, and shall measure from the place where the body lieth the distance of every city round about. And the ancients of that city, which they shall perceive to be nearer than the rest, shall take a heifer of the herd, that hath not drawn in the yoke, nor ploughed the ground. And they shall bring her into a rough and stony valley, that never was ploughed, nor sown. And there they shall strike off the head of the heifer. . . . And

washed his hands in the presence of the people, with the words : ' I am innocent of the blood of this just Man. Look you to it.' And the people replied : ' His blood be upon us and upon our children.'<sup>1</sup>

For our Lord Himself this was one of the most painful scenes of His whole Passion. He was a Jew, and He loved His people. Quite recently He had wept over Jerusalem, recalling in the midst of His tears how He had wished to gather all its children around Him, but Jerusalem willed it not. Now there is the same obstinacy, and worse still, the curse of blood. Blinded by passion, the Jews have called down its whole weight upon themselves and their children, and they were to feel it in very truth. In the lot of this people there is a lesson for the whole human race, namely that the worst chastisements are those that a man inflicts upon himself, when God leaves him to his folly and acts no more as his guide. Of this the whole history of Israel is a witness, and the prophets referred to the fact often enough : ' Destruction is thy own, O Israel.' But here these judgments of God appear as in a flash of lurid light : ' We have no king but Cæsar ' ; as a matter of fact, they would never have any other king but Cæsar ; and in spite of all their dreams of independence and all their frenzied revolts, the same yoke would fall upon them again and again, implacable, crushing, until it ground them to the dust. ' Away with Him, away with Him : crucify Him ! ' ' His blood be upon us and upon our children ! ' And their Christ, their Hope, died, indeed, nailed to the gibbet ; and this blood, that should have given them life, cried vengeance upon them, louder than Abel's blood. Before such chastisement Christ wept, but He wept in vain. In dying, He saw that His torments and death would be for the whole world a source of life ; but for the people He loved most here below, it would be the cause of a terrible chastisement. His mercy spent itself against their stubborn will.

the ancients of that city shall come to the person slain, and shall wash their hands over the heifer that was killed in the valley : and shall say : Our hands did not shed this blood, nor did our eyes see it. Be merciful to thy people Israel, whom Thou hast redeemed, O Lord, and lay not innocent blood to their charge, in the midst of Thy people Israel. And the guilt of blood shall be taken from them.'

We find an allusion to this same rite in Ps. xxv, 6 ; lxxii, 13 ; and similarly in Pagan writers ; *En.*, II, 719 ; Ovid, *Fast.*, II, 54.

<sup>1</sup> Kastner, p. 61, compares 2 Kings iii, 28 ; Dan. xiii, 46 ; Acts xx, 26 ; and on p. 63 : 2 Kings i, 16 ; Jer. li, 35 ; Acts xviii, 6.

But if, in this whole matter, the chief responsibility rests with the Jews, it does not follow that Pilate was innocent : he gave Him over to them, and by a formal judgement, too. This last point is less clearly in evidence, and might be doubted, if we paid attention only to those texts which tell us that Pilate delivered up Jesus to be crucified, viz. : ' he delivered Him to them to be crucified ' (John xix, 16) ; ' Pilate . . . delivered up Jesus . . . to be crucified ' (Mark xv, 15) ; ' . . . delivered Him unto them to be crucified ' (Matt. xxvii, 26) ; ' And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required. . . . But Jesus he delivered up to their will ' (Luke xxiii, 24-25). But, side by side with these, there are other passages that speak of a condemnation in the proper sense of the word.<sup>1</sup> This is the meaning of the incident recorded by S. John (xix, 13) : ' Pilate . . . sat down in the judgement seat ' ; and is implied still more clearly in what we are told of the inscription bearing the sentence (John xix, 19) : ' Pilate wrote a title also : and he put it upon the cross. And the writing was : JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS ' (John xix, 19).

This inscription, formally stating the sentence, was read by the judge who had pronounced it, then it was carried ostentatiously before the condemned man, and finally attached to the gibbet<sup>2</sup> on which he was put to death. By the brutal brevity of its composition Pilate avenged himself in his own way upon the Jews who had forced his hand ; and when they wanted to make him adopt a less positive version he regained all his haughtiness once more. ' What I have written, I have written.'

Pilate sent Jesus to punishment in the company of two other condemned men. This insulting association of the King of the Jews with two thieves was quite in keeping with Roman custom ; in the Acts of the Martyrs we meet it often enough.<sup>3</sup>

It may be that, in thus ordering this collective execution,

<sup>1</sup> Regnault, 113.

<sup>2</sup> In the same way, according to the Acts of the Martyrs of Lyons, a board was carried before the martyr Attalus, bearing the Latin inscription : ' This is Attalus, the Christian ' (H.E., V, i, 44).

<sup>3</sup> Thus in the Acts of the Martyrs of Palestine, VI, 4 : ' Agapius was led to the middle of the arena in company with a criminal, in custody, it was said, for killing his master. And lo ! the murderer of his master, offered to the beasts, was judged worthy of pity and benevolence, very much like that infamous fellow Barabbas in our Saviour's time ; whereupon shouts and acclamations re-echoed throughout the theatre, because the homicide had been spared by the philanthropy of the Emperor and deemed worthy of honour and liberty. . . . '

Pilate wished to take advantage of it in order to empty the prisons before the feast. In any case, it shows that he had little care for Jesus, and that all his hesitations and fears had scarcely affected the frivolous scepticism of his mind.

The carrying of the Cross is disposed of in a word by S. John, but described a little more closely in the other Gospels ; and Luke, especially, relates some details of great value.<sup>1</sup> When we read these narratives, so restrained and yet charged with such terrible realities, we cannot help recalling our Lord's own words to His disciples : ' If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me ' (Matt. xvi, 24 ; cp. x, 38).

This was no more than a metaphor at the time ; but now our Lord's torment had brought it home to His disciples as a terrible fact. The prediction at Cæsarea Philippi, against which Peter had revolted, was a pale description indeed compared with the scene that all Jerusalem had now before its eyes. And from then onwards Christians of every generation, who would read those words of our Lord, would understand them in the light of Calvary itself.

Moreover, Jesus had wished to give the greatest publicity to this event. The whole Jewish world was gathered at Jerusalem for the feast ; and now, more than at Pentecost within fifty days' time, there might have been seen people from all nations under heaven, ' Parthians and Medes and Elamites and inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Cretes and Arabians,' all had come to eat the Paschal Lamb at Jerusalem, all were about to be witnesses of the sacrifice of the Lamb of God. There they were, pressing across the town to make the last preparations for the feast, in quest, some of a lodging, another of a victim, joyful, busy, already feeling the dear memories of Passover and deliverance pass across their minds like the warm breeze of Egypt. When suddenly they were brought to a stand by this eddying stream of riot, by these cries of death which sounded from the Pretorium across the whole town, and at last they saw the mournful procession painfully making its way through the Holy City's congested streets.

It was the Roman custom to give to these executions the greatest possible publicity, and in Josephus' accounts of

<sup>1</sup> Mark xv, 20-3 ; Matt. xxvii, 31-3 ; Luke xxiii, 26-34.

that of Celer (A.J., XX, vi, 3), and again Niger (B.J., IV, vi, 1), we read of both being dragged right across the town. Nor was Jesus spared; this exhibition being insisted upon by the Jews more than by the Romans themselves. According to custom, a centurion was put in charge of the execution,<sup>1</sup> having at his disposal a small troop, *manipulum*, or century, i.e. sixty to one hundred men. Probably, on this occasion, greater precautions were taken, since the 'King of the Jews' was involved and, especially at Passover time, a rising of His followers might have been feared. Surrounded by this escort, the three condemned men advanced carrying their crosses, which may refer here to the whole cross, dragged along by the prisoner, or only to the cross-beam, carried under the arm. In any case, it soon became evident that, exhausted as He was by the scourging, Jesus could not Himself carry the instrument of His punishment, so the soldiers requisitioned the services of a Jew who was returning from the fields. This was a Cyrenian named Simon, whose two sons, Alexander and Rufus, are named by Mark, no doubt as being well known to the Christian community of his time. So for this man and his family the cross became an instrument of salvation; first of all others he had fulfilled to the letter the Master's precept: 'If any man will come after Me, let him . . . take up his cross and follow Me.' It is true that for him it was only a compulsory burden, imposed by authority, and no doubt submitted to against his will; but already the virtue of the Holy Cross was working wonders in his soul, as it would, a little later, in that of the good thief.

Alone among the evangelists S. Luke refers to the 'great multitude of people' that followed the procession. There were all those whom a morbid curiosity drove to witness such scenes; but there were, too, those who were attached to our Lord, who, troubled, wavering, despairing, wished at least to 'see the end!' Indeed, soon the two travellers to Emmaus would be telling the unknown Stranger who joined them on the way that He was the only person in Jerusalem who was not aware of the dreadful catastrophe that had taken place. And there were some faithful souls, such as the holy women, mentioned especially by S. Luke. These were not the Galileans whom we shall meet again

<sup>1</sup> Seneca, *De ira*, i, 16: letter of the Smyrmites on the death of Polycarp (H.E., IV, 15, 43).

later at the foot of the Cross, but another group, composed especially of women of Jerusalem itself. While men kept silence or joined the blasphemers, women had the courage to weep ; their presence and affliction adding one more piece of evidence to many others, of our Lord's work and influence in the Holy City. And Christ, in His reply, once more revealed Himself. Before Pilate, in utter self-forgetfulness, He had no care but for the responsibility of His judge ; but here, with the faithful souls who wept over Him, it was the evils that threatened *them* that alone were in His mind. Repeating His former predictions concerning the last days, He painted the immeasurable anguish that would soon hold the women of Jerusalem in its grasp, His own Passion being but the prelude to these appalling calamities that would break over the city that was murdering its God. 'For behold the days will come wherein they will say : Blessed are the barren and the wombs that have not borne !' And all was summed up in the closing words, forming for us all one of the gravest warnings on the Gospel page : ' . . . if in the green wood they do these things, what shall be done in the dry ? ' Jesus, feeling the weight of Divine justice, warns us, He, the Innocent One, suffering for us, the guilty, that that weight is terrible indeed.

And we find the same tender care still more movingly expressed in that other saying, also recorded by S. Luke :<sup>1</sup> ' Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.' These were our Lord's words as they nailed Him to the Cross. Those for whom He interceded are not solely, or first of all, the soldiers who did the deed : ' As for those poor wretches, it is too evident that they did not know what they were doing, for they had no idea that they were doing any harm ' (Lagrange). No, it was the arch-offenders who were meant, they against whom, through Christ's death, divine justice was being armed ; those who had called down upon themselves the curse of blood—the Jews. Compared with them, Pilate himself had the lesser sin. Yet it is the case that they themselves did not realize the full horror of their crime : ' And now, brethren,' Peter would be saying soon, ' I know that you did it through ignorance, as did also your rulers ' (Acts iii, 17 ; cp. xiii, 27). This persistence in praying for them shows the great grief

<sup>1</sup> On the authenticity of these words see Lagrange's note on that of Valensin-Huby.



that was tearing at our Lord's Sacred Heart ; His death, the atonement for men's sins, was, for those who brought it about, the greatest sin of the world, and its punishment would be the most rigorous of all.

And now they had reached Golgotha, a rocky peak, then outside the ramparts of the town.<sup>1</sup>

It was there that the last and most terrible act of the sacred drama would be played out. Josephus relates (B.J., VII, vi, 4) how it was by the fear of the atrocious punishment of the cross that the capitulation of Macheron was brought about. A Jew named Eleazar was the soul of the defence ; being surprised and made prisoner, he was scourged in full sight of the defenders of the town. At last a cross was set up, and he was led up to it ; the man, up to then so brave, felt himself giving way, and cried out to his friends to surrender, in order to save his life. From the town, his relations and friends cried with a loud voice that this torture was intolerable and that he must be rescued from it ; so intense was the emotion, that the citadel capitulated. But no one intervened on our Lord's behalf ; some women wept, while his enemies triumphed, and the crowd looked on and let things take their course. He was offered a tardy mitigation of His pain (Mark xv, 23) : ' And they gave Him to drink wine mingled with myrrh, but He took it not.' We read in the Babylonian Talmud : ' They used to give condemned men a cup of wine, with a grain of incense, to drink, to make them less conscious of the pain, according to Prov. xxxi, 6. The tradition is that the generous women of Jerusalem did this spontaneously at their own expense.'<sup>2</sup>

This text from the Talmud is undoubtedly too recent for one to be able to obtain reliable information from it ; it has always seemed that it was rather on account of a feeling of compassion that Jesus was offered this cup of spiced wine, and one may easily believe ' that it was persons friendly to Jesus, perhaps the holy women themselves, who prepared

<sup>1</sup> On the site of Calvary should be read Vincent, *Jérusalem*, II, pp. 89 ff. ' Apart from proofs to be produced later, it is already clear that the authenticity of Calvary and the Holy Sepulchre is possessed of the best guarantees of certainty that can be looked for on such a subject ' (p. 89). The position of the sun over Golgotha is minutely studied and described (pp. 97-104) ; and the Gospel data on the death and burial of Christ are analysed (pp. 92-5).

<sup>2</sup> *Sanhedrin*, 43a. The text of Proverbs runs : ' Give strong drink to them that are sad : and wine to them that are grieved in mind : let them drink and forget their want, and remember their sorrow no more.'

this beverage, and succeeded in getting it offered to Jesus. But He would not accept this assuagement of His sufferings, which He desired to endure without any impairment of His mental powers.<sup>1</sup>

We are sufficiently well informed as to the nature of the punishment of the cross. The chief classical sources of knowledge on the subject have been assembled by G. Humbert :<sup>2</sup> 'Generally, the condemned were first beaten with rods, after having been bound to the 'fork,' and then had to carry the cross, or at least the cross-piece, to the place of execution, being thus exposed to the insults and blows of the populace on the way. The cross was set up, and the doomed man raised upon it with the aid of straps and cords, then fixed to it with long nails driven through the hands and feet. A tablet describing the nature of the crime was placed on the higher part of the cross. Slaves were generally crucified outside the town. There a forest of crosses would arise, from which groans would proceed ; for the wretched victims were left to die of hunger and thirst, and to serve as fodder for vultures and dogs. Sometimes they lived in this condition for several days, unless, by a mitigation of the punishment, their limbs were ordered to be broken. This was the case among the Jews, so that the body might be taken down in the evening of the same day. So it was that, after the death of Christ, His Body was given up for burial.' The feet were fixed by two nails, probably on a sort of support resting on a stake.<sup>3</sup>

Their task finished, and all the condemned having been nailed to their crosses, the soldiers seated themselves at the foot of the gibbet, where they cast lots for our Blessed Lord's clothes. John, as an eye-witness, describes these events and

<sup>1</sup> See Lagrange, *S. Marc*, p. 427, where will be found the two passages referred to above.

<sup>2</sup> *Dictionnaire des Antiquités*, art. *Crux*, col. 1573.

<sup>3</sup> In connection with the division of the garments it has been asked if Jesus was crucified completely naked. Suarez (in Illam, Qu. 46, Art. 8) writes : 'The most usual opinion among the holy Fathers was that Christ was crucified completely naked,' and to this effect he quotes S. Ambrose, *In Luc.*, X, 110 ; S. Augustine, *C. Faustum*, XII, 23 ; *De Civitate Dei*, xvi, 2 ; S. Cyprian, *epist.* 63, 3. Upon this point Jewish custom was not clearly determined, and the Mishnah quotes to the contrary the opinion of R. Jehuda, adding, nevertheless, that it is contradicted by the majority of sages (*Sanh.*, VI, 3) : 'When they had come within four cubits of the stoning place, the condemned man was stripped of his garments. If it was a man, he was covered in front, if a woman, she was covered both in front and behind. Thus says R. Jehuda. But according to the sages, men are stoned naked, but women not.'

gives the most detailed account of this. He was impressed by the literal fulfilment of the prophecy : for the Son of David had seen His garments ' parted,' while on His vesture they cast lots. Perhaps this seamless cloak had been woven by our Lady or the holy women ;<sup>1</sup> in the minds of Christians it would remain always the symbol of the unity of the Church.

And while this spoliation and rough sport were going on, Jesus was in His agony, a sight upon which His cruel foes were feasting their eyes. Several distinct groups of on-lookers are mentioned by the evangelists. The people looked on (Luke xxiii, 35) and were silent. No doubt there were many friends of Jesus in the crowd, but terror-stricken at the catastrophe and scared by the Jews. There were, too, and in much larger numbers, waverers of the night before, whose attitude had been completely reversed by the scandal of the Cross ; their faith is dead ; they had hoped in this Man, and now there was nothing else in which either to believe or hope. There were also ' they that passed by ' mentioned by Mark (xv, 29) and Matthew (xxvii, 39). These seemed to know nothing of Jesus except what they had heard repeated all day by the people's leaders. He was a blasphemer, who boasted of His power to destroy the Temple and rebuild it in three days. Like the servant who struck Jesus before Annas, these, too, thought of nothing but paying court to their chiefs ; and they passed before the Cross ' wagging their heads and saying : Vah, Thou that destroyest the Temple of God and in three days buildest it up again : save Thyself, coming down from the cross.' Nor were the chiefs themselves absent from the crowd ; so full were their hearts of hatred and fierce joy that they could not keep silent, and disdaining directly to address their Victim, laughing among themselves, they indulged in such remarks as ' He saved others ; Himself He cannot save. Let Christ the King of Israel come down now from the Cross, that we may see and believe ! ' (Mark). Matthew records the same outrages while stressing the blasphemy : ' He trusted in God : let Him now deliver Him, if He will have Him. For He said : I am the Son of God.' Diverted at the sight of the Jewish leaders thus insulting their Messias, the very soldiers themselves joined in the chorus of con-

<sup>1</sup> Some commentators see here a reference to the white robe with which Herod bedecked our Lord. Cp. *supra*, p. 370, n. 1.

tempt : ' If Thou be the King of the Jews, save Thyself ! ' (Luke). While they were saying these things, they offered the Crucified One a small quantity of their usual beverage, *posca*, a mixture of vinegar and water.

And all this tumult was echoed in its turn by the dying thieves ; an incident that Luke has related in greater detail than the rest.

One of these two simply repeated what he had heard being said around him on every side : ' If Thou be Christ, save Thyself and us.' But he was rebuked by the other : ' Neither dost thou fear God, seeing thou art under the same condemnation. And we indeed justly : for we receive the due reward of our deeds. But this Man hath done no evil.' And then, suddenly moved by grace, he uttered that wonderful cry : ' Lord, remember me when Thou shalt come into Thy kingdom ! '

' This day,' answered Jesus, ' thou shalt be with Me in Paradise ' : words of sovereign dignity and love, revealing our Blessed Lord in the most perfect way. To the worst outrages there had been no reply ; but here was the promise of the kingdom to the first prayer of a contrite heart. His enemies thought that they had Him utterly in their power ; His very clothes had been snatched away, and the executioners were sharing them among themselves, and it is at this moment that He was disposing of Paradise as its undoubted Lord.<sup>1</sup>

During these last hours of our Lord's Agony occurred the darkness that spread over the whole earth, and at the same time the silence that made itself felt around the Cross ; and it was then that the little group of faithful followers of our Lord approached :

' Now there stood by the cross of Jesus, His mother and His mother's sister, Mary of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalen. When Jesus therefore had seen His mother

<sup>1</sup> Christian piety, craving for a more detailed account of this most touching incident, has wished to give names to the two robbers. Some Gospel manuscripts (Svete, *Mark*) call them Zoathan and Chammatha ; the Acts of Pilate, Dysmas and Gestas ; the Arabic gospel of the Infancy, Titus and Dumachus ; all which diversity of opinion is proof of how little we know. We may think, if we like, that these brigands belonged to the troop of Barabbas, and that they were Galileans who had possibly heard of Christ and perhaps even come into contact with Him. But all that is merely of supplementary interest. The essential thing, so unmistakably indicated by the Gospel account, is the sovereign efficacy of the Cross, that could make a brigand into a saint : ' whosoever is near the fire is near God.'

and the disciple standing whom He loved, He saith to His mother : Woman, behold thy Son. After that, He saith to the disciple : Behold thy mother. And from that hour the disciple took her to his own.' (John xix, 25-27.<sup>1</sup>)

This scene, so touching in its intimacy, has always been specially dear to the piety of the Christian world. Our readers may like to have S. Ambrose's comment upon it, in his letter to the clergy of Vercelli (P.L., XVI, 1218) :

' Mary, our Lord's Mother, stood before the Cross of her Son ; I know this through no other authority than that of the evangelist S. John. Others have recorded how the world was shaken during the Lord's Passion, the sky veiled by darkness, the sun having taken to flight ; how the thief was received into paradise after the pious confession he had made. But it is John who has taught me what the others have not ; how, on His Cross, Jesus called to His Mother. John has laid more stress upon this mark of filial piety, received by His Mother from Christ, Vanquisher of torments, than he did upon the gift of participation in the kingdom of Heaven. No doubt it was a sign of goodness to pardon the thief ; but much more was it a mark of piety to honour His Mother with such a love. "Woman," He says, "behold thy Son" ; "Behold thy Mother." It is Christ's testament from the Cross, dividing the duties of piety between His Mother and the disciple whom He loved. Thus the Lord drew up His testament, not only His public one, but His domestic one as well, and John added to it his signature, a worthy witness to a Testator so great. Precious testament, by which is bequeathed not money but eternal life ; which is written not with ink, but by the Spirit of the Living God, of Him who said : "My tongue is the pen of a scrivener that writeth swiftly" (Ps. xliv, 2). Nor had Mary fallen below what was fitting for the Mother of Christ. While the Apostles were in flight, she had stood at the foot of the Cross, while with her maternal eyes she contemplated her Son's wounds, not expecting from them so much the death

<sup>1</sup> We may understand this text in two ways : either identifying the sister of Mary with the wife of Cleophas, or no less reasonably here distinguishing four holy women. The second, the sister of Mary, would be unnamed, but by comparison with Mark xv, 40 she would be identified with Salome, mother of the sons of Zebedee (Matt. xx, 20). This second interpretation is not unlikely ; the anonymity in which John thus leaves his mother is characteristic enough ; moreover, the relationship which connects him with Mary helps us to understand later on our Lord's gift of John to Mary and Mary to John. Cp. *supra*, I, p. 35.

of her Well-beloved as the salvation of the world. Or perhaps because she knew, she, the dwelling-place of the King, that her Son's death was the redemption of the world ; perhaps, I say, she thought that she herself would add something to this gift which was to enrich the world. But Jesus had no need of aid in His redemption of the world, He who, without help from anyone, wrought the salvation of all. Hence the words : " I am become as a man without help, free among the dead " (Ps. lxxxvii, 5). He welcomed His Mother's love, but He sought the assistance of no man.'

To this passage we will add nothing, contemplating this great mystery in silence. Like Sinai of old, Calvary is veiled in darkness, with a veil of mystery, but of mourning above all. The blasphemers are quiet now, overwhelmed, in spite of themselves, by the horror of the anguish close at hand ; and the Crucified is silent, too, plunged with His faithful ones in this dark night. Never had they suffered so much, yet never had they prayed so much ; never had they felt themselves so near to Christ and so intimately united to Him as in this agony, where all seemed lost and gone.<sup>1</sup>

Suddenly from the Cross resounded a great cry : ' Eloi, Eloi, lamma sabachthani ? ' These are the first words, in Aramaic, of the twenty-first psalm. In all the great crises of His life, Jesus had instinctively borrowed the mighty voice of the psalms to express His sentiments and prayers. So it was that, at the Temptation, He repelled the assaults of Satan ; and now, in this hour of final trial, He repeated the sacred texts once more. So here we may read over once again this twenty-first psalm, the last prayer of the dying Christ :

' O God, My God, look upon Me : why hast Thou forsaken Me ? Far from My salvation are the words of My sins. O My God, I shall cry by day, and Thou wilt

<sup>1</sup> S. John of the Cross describes the desolation of Christ with great power, emphasizing its redemptive value, and the lesson arising out of it for every Christian soul : ' . . . It is certain that at the moment of His death His soul was desolate and, as it were, brought to nothing, forsaken of His Father, left without comfort in the most distressing dryness, so that He cried out on the Cross, " My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me ? " This was the greatest obvious abandonment of His whole life ; and it was then that He wrought the greatest work of His whole life of miracles and of wonders ; the reconciliation and union with God by grace of all mankind ' (*Mount Carmel*, II, 6, 7).

not hear : and by night, and it shall not be reputed as folly in Me. But Thou dwellest in the holy place, the praise of Israel. In Thee have our fathers hoped : they have hoped, and Thou hast delivered them. They cried to Thee, and they were saved : they trusted in Thee, and were not confounded. But I am a worm and no man : the reproach of men and the outcast of the people. All they that saw Me have laughed Me to scorn : they have spoken with the lips and wagged the head. He hoped in the Lord, let Him deliver Him : let Him save Him, seeing He delighteth in Him. For Thou art He that hast drawn Me out of the womb : My hope from the breasts of My Mother. I was cast upon Thee from the womb. From My Mother's womb Thou art My God : depart not from Me. For tribulation is very near : for there is none to help Me. Many calves have surrounded Me : fat bulls have besieged Me. They have opened their mouths against Me, as a lion ravening and roaring. I am poured out like water : and all My bones are scattered. My heart is become like wax melting in the midst of My bowels. My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and My tongue hath cleaved to My jaws : and Thou hast brought Me down into the dust of death. For many dogs have encompassed Me : the council of the malignant hath besieged Me. They have dug My hands and feet. They have numbered all My bones. And they have looked and stared upon Me. They parted My garments amongst them : and upon My vesture they cast lots. But Thou, O Lord, remove not Thy help to a distance from Me : look towards My defence. Deliver, O God, My soul from the sword : My only one from the hand of the dog. Save Me from the lion's mouth : and My lowness from the horns of the unicorns. I will declare Thy name to My brethren : in the midst of the Church will I praise Thee. Ye that fear the Lord, praise Him : all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify Him. Let all the seed of Israel fear Him : because He hath not slighted nor despised the supplication of the poor man. Neither hath He turned away His face from Me : and when I cried to Him He heard Me.' (Ps. xxi, 1-25.)

And so this cry of anguish ended with a canticle of triumph and hope. It was not unknown to our Lord's foes. This psalm was familiar to them, too, but at present their

heart is closed to prayer. This sublime inspired utterance rang no more in their ears ; they only used it as an occasion for new sarcasm : ‘ Behold, He calleth Elias. . . . Stay, let us see if Elias come to take Him down.’

However, Jesus uttered still another cry : ‘ I thirst.’ Thirst was the great torment of the crucified, and from the beginning of His torture, Christ endured it without complaint. But now, John tells us, He wished to fulfil an old prophecy (Ps. lxxviii, 22). A vessel full of vinegar was at hand, and the soldiers filled a sponge, which they set on the end of a reed and put it to His mouth. When Jesus had taken the vinegar He said : ‘ It is consummated,’ and after one great cry, added : ‘ Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit,’ ‘ and bowing His head, He gave up the ghost.’ Here, once more, we have an echo of the psalmist’s prayer :

‘ In Thee, O Lord, have I hoped, let me never be confounded : deliver me in Thy justice. Bow down Thy ear to me : make haste to deliver me. . . . For Thou art my strength and my refuge : and for Thy name’s sake Thou wilt lead me and nourish me. Thou wilt bring me out of this snare which they have hidden for me : for Thou art my protector. Into Thy hands I commend my spirit : Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord, the God of truth.’ (Ps. xxx, 1-2, 4-6.)

To these words, intimate as they are, our Lord added a still more filial note : ‘ Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit !’ Prayer, filial confidence, whole-hearted surrender to the Father in Heaven ; that was the great teaching of the Sermon on the Mount, and it was the last lesson of the dying Lord.

Immediately after our Lord’s death, the veil of the Temple was rent, there was an earthquake, the rocks were cleft asunder, the tombs opened, ‘ the bodies of dead saints ’ came out of them and walked about the streets of Jerusalem. The centurion exclaimed : ‘ Indeed this was the Son of God ’ ; and the crowds who had been present at the spectacle returned to the city, striking their breasts. This shock by which the earth itself was shaken, this stupor that seized upon men was, all of it, not merely a passing impression, but rather the first signs of a movement of which nothing could henceforth stand in the way. Christ’s death has renewed everything in Heaven and earth, and every year the passage of time makes the significance of Calvary’s



drama clearer still. Christ's enemies thought that by this ignominious punishment they would dishonour Him for all time ; while, really, they only exalted Him by setting Him upon the Cross : ' I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to Myself.' Men's cruelty had invented these tortures to make an example of their fellow-men ; and the unhappy wretch condemned to them was nailed to the cross to serve as a scarecrow, like the body of a bird of prey. And it would be an example, in fact, *the* example, the ideal of human suffering from henceforth, to be raised between heaven and earth, to touch the heart of God and comfort the faint-heartedness of men. One of the most touching of the incidents in the history of the martyrs of Lyons is that of the sufferings of S. Blandina. The young slave woman had already passed through the whole range of tortures and, at last, the executioners bound the poor torn body to a post (H.E., V, i, 41) : ' Blandina was bound and attached to a beam to be devoured by the wild beasts let loose against her. The very sight of her thus tied up in the form of a cross, and the sound of her praying aloud, gave great courage to these athletes of Christ. In the midst of the struggle they seemed to see in their sister, with their bodily eyes, Him who had been crucified for them, there to persuade them that believe in Him that whosoever suffers here below for the glory of Christ will have his lot eternally with the Living God.'

And surely we have here one aspect of the Church's story. Even if they do not equal the heroism of the martyrs of Lyons, all Christians, like them, must suffer, fight and die. What is to uphold them in their daily struggles and, above all, in their agony and death, if not the thought and image of Him who died for them, and whom the Church keeps continually before their eyes ? When the pain is too sharp, or the grief too heavy, all other considerations too often lose their force : like the good thief we cannot but recognize that the suffering has been merited by sin, and that the trials are a preparation for glory to come ; but the sense of justice is not keen enough, and the hope not sufficiently strong. Then we must lift our eyes to the Cross, and our cry to the Crucified, or else altogether doubt His love. Christ has told us this Himself ; in the desert of life there is no other sign of salvation than that. The brazen serpent healed the Israelites ; Christ crucified saves us now.

## CHAPTER VIII

THE RESURRECTION. THE APPEARANCES OF CHRIST.

THE ASCENSION.

### *I. The Resurrection in the Apostolic Catechesis.*

THE story of a man's life ends with his death. Even though he may have been the most powerful of geniuses, or the greatest of saints, he vanishes then from the world. His influence may still be felt here below ; he may survive in his disciples, or his works ; but all that is no more than an echo of a voice now silent for ever.

On this point, our Lord's history differs from that of every man. The terrible drama of Calvary did not prove the definitive end of His terrestrial course. He recovered from that mortal blow, and lived among His followers for forty days more. It was not His death but His Ascension that put a term to His life on earth.

So it was that from the first day of His risen life, the Apostles understood the life of their Master. On the morrow of the Ascension, even before Pentecost, it fell to S. Peter to fill Judas' place in the apostolic college, and what he demanded of the future Apostle was that he should have been the witness of our Lord's whole career, 'beginning from the baptism of John, until the day when He was taken up from us' (Acts i, 22).

And, in fact, we have there the burden of the testimony of those first witnesses of Christ. The apostolic catechesis, of which our Gospels have preserved the teaching, presents the whole career of Christ, from the Baptism to the Ascension, as a closely knit drama of which the unity cannot be destroyed. In saying this we in no way deny the glorified life of Christ. We firmly believe that He lives and reigns in Heaven at the right hand of the Father. There it was that S. Stephen saw Him ; from thence He would often come to help and guide the Apostles—S. Peter at Joppa, S. Paul at Jerusalem—and in many other circumstances

besides. But these appearances no longer bore the character of the conversations that followed the Resurrection, during the forty days. These marked one phase, the last, of our Lord's life on earth ; while all that follows the Ascension belongs to the life in Heaven.

This conception of our Blessed Lord's life, so clearly expressed in the Gospels, has imposed itself on the whole Christian tradition, and is repudiated only by those who at the same time repudiate the testimony of Christianity as a whole.

Renan is an example of this break with the historic belief. For him, the life of Jesus ended on Calvary. The work lay in ruins, the Prophet was dead, all was at an end. The writer wishes to give the impression of this definite check, and nothing could serve him better in doing so than this arbitrary version of the facts. All that was to follow, the birth of the Church, the wonderful efflorescence of graces and prodigies born of the Cross, all that is transferred to another work, *The Apostles* ; in confidence that the careless or biased reader will accept without too much difficulty the inference that so powerful a movement, which for nineteen centuries carried the known world with it, sprang from an illusion for which not a single plausible interpretation can be given. Here we are in no way concerned with apologetics as such ; it is enough if we can show, from the point of view of history, that our Lord's life is inseparable from His work, of which it alone can be the sufficient explanation and ground ; and that if we disregard the Resurrection, we render unintelligible the faith of the Apostles and the birth of the Church.

In the first years of Christianity no one thought of doubting the Resurrection of Christ, but it should be carefully noted that from the very beginning this fact was considered as one of the primary supports of the Christian structure. Here we may recall what S. Paul wrote to his faithful at Corinth, twenty-five years after the event. After mentioning the testimonies that put the matter beyond doubt, the Apostle concludes :

‘ Now if Christ be preached, that He arose again from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead ? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen again. And if Christ be not risen again, then is our preaching vain : and your

faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God : because we have given testimony against God, that He hath raised up Christ, whom He hath not raised up, if the dead rise not again. For if the dead rise not again, neither is Christ risen again. And if Christ be not risen again, your faith is vain : for you are yet in your sins. Then they also that are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now Christ is risen from the dead, the first-fruits of them that sleep.<sup>1</sup>

This is a most enlightening passage. In the first place it helps us to realize the lively opposition which faith in the Resurrection encountered in Grecian circles. Attempts have been made, especially in the last twenty years, to explain the origin and development of Christian dogma by the influence of the mystic religions, the mystery of Eleusis, the cult of Attis or Isis. More particularly is this the case with the belief in a God who died and rose again.<sup>2</sup> The comparisons thus suggested may be ingenious enough ; but they are deceptive and on this capital point of the Resurrection most of all.

The Greeks, far from taking the Christian dogma in this sense, found it a source of irritation and affront, and that from the very start. They listened willingly when at the Areopagus at Athens, S. Paul explained to them his belief in one God ; but when he went on to the Resurrection they silenced him and sent him away with contempt. So long as Hellenism was a living force it protested against this affirmation of the Christian faith, which was the object of the attack of Gnosticism from its beginning. It was this cardinal doctrine that S. Paul had especially to defend, as later S. Ignatius of Antioch and, later still, S. Justin, Athenagoras, S. Methodius and all the Christian apologists.

And if the attack is obstinate, the defence is free from weakness or compromise of any kind. It is a question of fundamental dogma, with which the entire faith stands or crumbles away. So S. Paul does not content himself solely with stressing the apologetic significance of the Resurrection as the decisive proof upon which rests our Faith. Above all he stresses the importance of the fact in the whole

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xv, 12-20. Cp. L. de Grandmaison, *Jésus Christ*, II, 374.

<sup>2</sup> This hypothesis has been effectively refuted by L. de Grandmaison, *ibid.*, II, 510-34.

Christian economy : Christ, he says, ' was delivered up for our sins, and rose again for our justification.' By His death Jesus, our Head, has stricken sin unto death and laid sinful humanity in the tomb ; in raising Him from the dead, God calls us with Him to a new life. We know how, by its symbolism, baptism represents this death and resurrection. The neophyte, immersed in the baptismal water, signified by that very fact that he is united to the Lord's passion and dies with Him to sin, and when he emerges once more it is as a new man, whom Christ calls to share His new and glorious life.

Death and life ; in these words lies all Christianity, wholly resting on this double mystery of our Lord's death and rising again ; both are by equal title the indispensable supports of our faith. If Christ has not died, we are unredeemed ; if He be not risen, His sacrifice has not been accepted by God ; He has died in vain, and we who have put in Him our trust are the most miserable of men.

This brief summary of S. Paul's theology is sufficient to bring home to us the importance of the dogma of the Resurrection. It is not only, or chiefly, a consolation for our piety, rejoicing to contemplate, as living, Him whom it had mourned as dead ; it is above all the foundation of our faith. It is in this glorious life of our Lord that we behold the pledge and first-fruits of our own ; united to our Head we are now justified, waiting to share His triumph and life in Heaven. And the whole creation, which rests upon man, and which he has dragged with him in his fall, begins to rise again with him, trembling with hope as it awaits restoration final and entire.<sup>1</sup>

If faith in the Resurrection has been from the beginning so essential to Christianity, it is clearly necessary that from the beginning also it should have been held as an indubitable fact. And indeed, in the same passage from which we have quoted the last few verses, S. Paul briefly reminds his followers of the teaching he has given them and the principal testimony upon which rests their faith.

' For I delivered unto you first of all, which I also received : how that Christ died for our sins, according to the scriptures. And that He was buried : and that He rose again the third day, according to the scriptures.

<sup>1</sup> Rom. viii, 21.

And that He was seen by Cephas ; and after that by the eleven. Then was He seen by more than five hundred brethren at once : of whom many remain until this present, and some are fallen asleep. After that, He was seen by James : then by all the Apostles. And last of all, He was seen also by me, as by one born out of due time. For I am the least of the Apostles, who am not worthy to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God. But by the grace of God, I am what I am. And His grace in me hath not been void : but I have laboured more abundantly than all they. Yet not I, but the grace of God with me. For whether I or they, so we preach : and so you have believed.' (1 Cor. xv, 3-11.)

Here we have no account of the Resurrection and glorified life of our Blessed Lord, but only a brief summary of the main witnesses that support our faith.<sup>1</sup> Not all who saw the Risen Lord are enumerated here, but only those whose names have the greatest weight or whose testimony is the easiest to check. First Peter, head of the Apostolic College, whose authority, even at Corinth, was so assured that many made use of his name in opposition to S. Paul (1 Cor. i, 12) ; then the twelve, and then ' five hundred brethren at once.' The Apostle expressly notes that most of these were living at the time ; they could be questioned if anyone so willed. Then comes James, whose name would have decisive weight with the Judaizing party ; then, all the apostles, and then S. Paul himself.

If we compare this list with those that can be reconstructed from the Gospel narratives, the first thing that strikes us is that all such lists are incomplete. S. Paul does not mention the appearance to the holy women, and we have no difficulty in understanding why, for with the Corinthians these women would have no authority at all. Conversely, he recalls the appearance to S. Peter, which is nowhere related in detail, but just mentioned in passing by S. Luke ; moreover, he speaks of a collective appearance to five hundred brethren, of whom the evangelists say nothing. So from the start we notice in the Resurrection narratives what we have remarked many times before ; the Gospels are not, nor are they intended to be, complete

<sup>1</sup> Cp. L. de Grandmaison, II, p. 378.

narratives. They describe certain passages from our Lord's life ; the rest remains in shadow, and hidden from us for all time.

And once again, in what we shall write on the glorified life of Christ we have no other ambition than we had in the first part of this work. We have never claimed, with the fragments at our disposal, to reconstruct the life of Jesus as a whole ; no more do we try here to give a detailed account of these forty days. We shall simply interpret the data furnished by the Christian tradition, to understand and co-ordinate them being our only aim.

## II. *Our Lord's Burial. The Empty Tomb. The Appearances at Jerusalem and Emmaus.*

We must first of all assemble what information is supplied by the Gospels about the burial of Christ.<sup>1</sup>

After the death of Jesus, those who, having heard His last cry, had seen the darkness spreading over the Holy City and felt the ground trembling under their feet, returned to Jerusalem, striking their breasts. A little group of faithful ones remained by the Cross. Quite close to Christ were Mary, His Mother, and S. John ; some distance off were the holy women who formerly had served Him in Galilee, and had followed Him to Calvary now. They could not sever themselves from Him even after His death. There they stood, Mary Magdalen, Mary, mother of Joseph and James the Less ; Salome, and many other women that came up with Him to Jerusalem (Mark xv, 41).

Some soldiers went up to the victims and broke the legs of the two thieves ; while one of them, seeing that Jesus was dead already, pierced His Heart with a lance, water and blood gushing forth (John xix, 31-37).

Then came Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus. Joseph, a member of the Sanhedrin, had gone in search of Pilate and obtained permission from him to bury our Blessed Lord. He wished to lay His Body in a tomb that he had

<sup>1</sup> The rabbinical tradition on the burial of condemned criminals is described by A. Buchler, *L'Enterrement des criminels d'après le Talmud et le Midrach. Revue des Etudes Juives*, XLVI (1903), pp. 74-88 : The bodies were cast into ditches belonging to the tribunals ; when the flesh had rotted away, the bones could be given back to the relatives for burial in the family sepulchre.—The burial of Jesus constitutes, therefore, a privileged exception ; but this privilege had been granted by Pilate, and the very fact of this concession invalidates Buchler's objections (p. 87). Cp. *supra*, p. 375, n. 3.

prepared for himself in a garden quite near Calvary. Nicodemus came with him carrying a hundred pounds of spices. They took Jesus' Body, wrapped it in fine linen and laid it in the tomb hollowed in the rock. The women assisted at the burial, carefully noting the situation of the tomb. Then returning to Jerusalem they bought spices and ointments, and as evening fell and the Sabbath began they remained at home.

The next day, the Sabbath, the chief priests and Pharisees, went in search of Pilate :

'Sir, we have remembered, that that seducer said, while He was yet alive : After three days I will rise again. Command therefore the sepulchre to be guarded until the third day : lest perhaps His disciples come and steal Him away and say to the people : He is risen from the dead. And the last error shall be worse than the first. Pilate saith to them : You have a guard. Go, guard it as you know. And they departing, made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone and setting guards.' (Matt. xxvii, 63-66.<sup>1</sup>)

<sup>1</sup> An inscription recently published by M. Cumont brings new light to bear on this episode : *Un rescrit impérial sur la violation de sépulture ; Revue Historique*, CLXIII (March-April, 1930), pp. 241-66. This inscription, which since 1878 had been part of the Froehner collection, was then published for the first time : in his manuscript catalogue Froehner had put the following note : 'Slab of marble sent from Nazareth in 1878.' The text reads :

'By order of Cæsar : It is our pleasure that the tombs and monuments raised in honour of ancestors, children or relatives remain eternally inviolate. If anyone is convicted of destroying them, or in any other way removing the bodies that rest therein, or criminally disturbing them, thus violating the burial of the dead, or displacing the inscriptions or stones, it is our will that that man be prosecuted and brought to judgement for violating the veneration due equally to men as to the gods. For in future far more care must be taken in honouring the dead. *Let no person be permitted to disturb them. Else, it is our will that that person be punished by death as a violator of tombs.*'

In his analysis of this inscription, Cumont sees it as consisting of two distinct parts : 'The first, manifestly drawn up by a jurist of the imperial chancery, enumerates several crimes which, according to Roman Law, constitute a *violatio sepulchri*. In the second, we recognize a postscript added by the hand of the Emperor himself ; and since here only one crime is mentioned, to wit, the illicit transfer of a corpse, it is in the highest degree probable that a case of this nature had been submitted to the prince by the procurator of Judæa' (p. 265, cp. 256). (In the above quotation we have emphasized this second part in italics.)

By the formation of the letters, the inscription has been ascribed to the reign of Augustus or Tiberius. If it is assigned to the reign of Tiberius, 'we are naturally tempted to connect the prohibition contained in our rescript with another and greater event that took place during the reign



No sooner had appeared the brightness of that first Easter dawn than the holy women, who no longer observed the Sabbath rest, hastened to the tomb.<sup>1</sup>

of Tiberius. According to the Gospel, when the tomb of Jesus was found to be empty, the priests of the Temple spread abroad, through the Roman soldiers, the rumour that certain of the disciples had carried off the body of the Crucified during the night, and before long this accusation was indeed accredited throughout all the Jewish communities. . . . Possibly Pilate, describing the imputation brought against the disciples by the Jews, asked the Emperor's advice, so that our *διάταγμα Καίσαρος* would be an extract from the prince's reply. This extract would have been graven on marble and exhibited in Nazareth whence, precisely, Jesus had originally come, and which still remained hostile to Him.

Cumont presents this interpretation only as a hypothesis, inevitably inviting objections, although it cannot be summarily rejected. He concludes (and with this conclusion we agree) :

'If we admit this hypothesis, the juridical conclusions to be drawn from this remarkable document will be hardly modified, but it will acquire a value of another order. For commentators on the narrative of the Resurrection it should have the same sort of interest as the inscription mentioning the census of Quirinius offers to interpreters of the narrative of the Nativity. If our conjecture be rejected, our inscription will retain at least this importance for exegetes, that it will more firmly establish the criminality of the fraud laid to the charge of the disciples, who would have risked their lives if they had attempted it' (p. 266). This inscription has been commented on by Abel and Lagrange (*Revue biblique*, 1930, pp. 567-71) ; Goguel (*Rev. d'Hist. et de Philos. relig.*, 1930, pp. 289-93).

<sup>1</sup> We may observe that the actual fact of the Resurrection itself is not described in the Gospels, and this silence is indeed remarkable. Jesus coming forth alive from the tomb on the dawn of the Passover—what an arresting picture, and how it would have tempted a painter of imagination ! But no, our evangelists say nothing about it ; they are merely faithful witnesses, and upon this episode they have no evidence to give.

To fully appreciate this silence, we may compare our canonical Gospels with one of the most ancient apocryphal writings, the Gospel of Peter :

'Early in the morning,' we read, 'on the dawn of the Sabbath, a crowd of men came from Jerusalem and round about to see the sealed tomb. But in the darkness of the early hours, lit by the first gleam of the dawning Sabbath, as the soldiers were mounting guard, two by two, a great voice was heard in the heavens. They saw the sky open, and two men, blazing with light, descending out of it, came nigh to the tomb. Now the stone that leant against the door rolled away from it of its own accord, and set itself on one side ; and the tomb opened, and the two young men went in. Seeing which, the soldiers awoke the Centurion and the Ancients, who were there, also watching. And while the soldiers were explaining what they had seen, they saw once more three men coming from the tomb. Two of them upheld the third, and the cross followed them. And the heads of the two who upheld touched the sky, and His head, who was upheld, outpassed the heavens. And they heard a voice coming from the heavens which said : "Hast thou preached to the dead ?" And a reply came from the cross : "Yes." And the soldiers planned among themselves to go away and tell Pilate the whole affair.'

De Grandmaison's view of this extract, whose version of it I have followed, is as follows : 'The principal interest of the narrative thus interpreted resides in its manifestly secondary and derivative character. Immediately the author leaves the solid foundation of evangelical tradition to digress into a criticism, or even an explanation, faults of taste, anachron

‘And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalen and Mary, the mother of James, and Salome bought sweet spices, that coming, they might anoint Jesus. And very early in the morning, the first day of the week, they come to the sepulchre, the sun being now risen. And they said one to another : Who shall roll us back the stone from the door of the sepulchre ? And looking, they saw the stone rolled back. For it was very great. And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed with a white robe : and they were astonished. Who saith to them : Be not affrighted. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen : He is not here. Behold the place where they laid Him. But go, tell His disciples and Peter that He goeth before you into Galilee. There you shall see Him, as He told you. But they going out, fled from the sepulchre : for a trembling and fear had seized them. And they said nothing to any man : for they were afraid.’ (Mark xvi, 1-8 ; cp. Matt. xxviii, 1-10 ; Luke xxiv, 1-12.)

From this narrative, with its parallel passages, we gain a vivid impression of the emotions of that first hour. The difference in detail between the accounts has been often noticed. Matthew and Mark speak of one angel ; Luke and John mention two. Mark tells us that the holy women were so frightened that they told no one ; Matthew and Luke relate that the Apostles were warned by them. John describes in great detail the part played by Mary Magdalen, saying nothing of the other women mentioned by the three Synoptics. To presume on these divergences to reject all the evidence would be faulty method indeed. We can easily understand that such keen emotion as must have been felt by the disciples would have produced different impressions upon those experiencing it, traces of which would appear in the narratives themselves. To take only one example : ‘Mark admirably describes the first moment with all its astonishment and fear. We know that the women recovered themselves, and that joy, as often happens,

isms and improbabilities abound. . . . The resurrection is described, and with all those characteristics of the incongruous, the false and the gigantic, which are the peculiar and unmistakable signature of the apocryphamonger . . .’ (*Jésus Christ*, II, pp. 397 ff.). Cp. L. Vaganay, *L’Evangile de Pierre* (Paris, 1930), pp. 287-305.

soon mingled itself with their initial fright, making them capable of transmitting the message entrusted to them by our Blessed Lord.<sup>1</sup>

The discovery of the empty tomb and the first appearance are easy enough to reconstruct. At dawn the women had hastened to the tomb, which was guarded by Pilate's soldiers. Of this, no doubt, the holy women knew nothing, but there was another obstacle by which their purpose might be brought to nought—none other than the great stone rolled up to the entrance of the tomb. Absorbed in their grief and longing, they had not thought of it at first ; but on the long journey to the tomb they thought of it as they had seen it the night before : ' Who shall roll us back the stone from the door of the sepulchre ? ' is the anxious question that occurs. We know the arrangements of the Jewish sepulchres—and in particular of this one of our Lord's. At the bottom was a mortuary chamber, quite narrow, on the side of which was a wide ledge of stone, slightly hollowed—this was the actual resting-place of the deceased. From there, a very low opening gave access to a small antechamber, itself closed by a heavy stone, put there from outside and fitting into a concave groove. This was the great stone that Christ had had removed from Lazarus' tomb, when He drew nigh to raise him from the dead. But who would roll it away to-day, letting the holy women into the sepulchre to embalm the Body of the Lord ? The women were concerned with nothing else at all ; the idea of the Resurrection did not even enter their minds. As they drew near in the growing daylight they saw the stone rolled away. The entry to the tomb was open ; a great light shone from inside and, all trembling with emotion, they went in. There they found the angels, and while they stood dumbfounded and almost stunned with amazement and fright, they heard the reassuring words : ' Be not affrighted. You seek Jesus of Nazareth who was crucified. He is risen : He is not here. Behold the place where they laid Him. But go, tell His disciples and Peter that He goeth before you into Galilee. There you shall see Him, as He told you.'

It would seem that Mary Magdalen had not waited as long as this. No sooner had she seen the displaced stone and the open tomb than she was wholly mastered by one

<sup>1</sup> L. de Grandmaison, *Jésus Christ*, II, p. 384, n. 1.

thought : someone had taken away the Lord's Body ; and immediately she hurried off to warn Peter and John. No doubt she found them with Mary, the Mother of Jesus, whom John had taken to himself, Peter crushed by his grief and penitence, John prostrated by Calvary's terrible scenes. Suddenly the Magdalen entered : ' They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid Him ' (John xx, 2). Rising without a moment's delay, Peter and John ran to the sepulchre, John reaching it first. Stooping a little, so as to look within, he saw the linen cloths lying on one side, but did not go in, his emotion, no doubt, being too strong. He could not penetrate to the bottom of that sacred tomb, so full was he of anguish just beginning to be mixed with hope. Peter, his friend and guide, was, as usual, more active and decided ; emotion urged him to action, and entering, he carefully examined everything within ; the discarded shroud, the linen cloth in which the Head had been wrapped, lying folded apart. And now John came in, too, saw and believed (John xx, 3-10).

Meanwhile, Mary Magdalen who had followed them back to the sepulchre, did not go in with them but stayed outside to weep. Then, once more, she stooped down and looked in, and saw two angels sitting ' one at the head, and one at the feet, where the Body of Christ had been laid.' ' Woman, why weepest thou ? ' She could only repeat the thought which, ever since the dawn, had been in her mind. ' Because they have taken away my Lord ; and I know not where they have laid Him.' Turning from the tomb she found herself face to face with a man standing near her, whose features she could not distinguish through her tears ; for the rest, she scarcely looked at him, so absorbed was she in her grief. No doubt, she told herself, it was the gardener, returning to his work after the Sabbath. He had removed the stone and taken the body away. ' Sir,' she said to Him, ' if Thou hast taken Him hence, tell me where Thou hast laid Him : and I will take Him away.' Then came from the stranger's lips the one word ' Mary,' and turning round she answered Him ' Rabboni ! ' The Good Shepherd calls the sheep by name, and they follow Him ' because they know His voice.'

Mary wanted to throw herself at Jesus' feet, to clasp them once more, to bathe them with her tears, as she had two days ago, at the foot of the Cross. But our Lord gently

kept her at a distance : ' Do not touch Me : for I am not yet ascended to My Father.' Christ's glorified life during these forty days would no longer be what His life had been before among the disciples at Jerusalem, or the Galilean crowds. Nor was it yet the life of Heaven in the Father's presence, among the angels and the elect. For the rest, it was not the time then for peaceful contemplation, at the feet of Christ. Mary receives a message : ' Go to my brethren and say to them : I ascend to my Father and to your Father, to my God and to your God ' (John xx, 11-12).

The stories that we have just been reading give us our first impression of that Easter morn. We note the mourning and distracted state of the women, and the first awakening of a faith that had seemed dead, and that the angelic appearances did not at once suffice to restore. Wholly wrapped up in their grief—still crushed by the terrible blow of Calvary—in the displaced stone, and the empty tomb, the holy women found only a fresh discouragement and an additional blow. ' They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him.' That was Mary Magdalen's tale of woe, incessantly repeated—to the Apostles, to the angels and to Jesus Himself. To bring her back to herself it needed the direct call of the Master, using the name ' Mary,' by which He had addressed her so frequently in the past.

And what we find in the Magdalen, we shall find in the other disciples, too. They were slow to believe. They neither recalled our Lord's predictions of the past, nor were affected by new wonders, nor convinced by the testimony of the women or the other Apostles. Only the appearance, voice and touch of Jesus Himself revived their extinguished faith.

This restoration of the disciples' faith was the chief fruit of the appearances of those forty days. No doubt we shall find that they teach some new lessons as well. But the great lesson given by the risen Christ was that of faith, faith stronger than death, which from henceforth nothing could destroy.

Among all the Apostles, the first to be noticed by Christ was Peter, their head. The appearance vouchsafed to him is only known to us by one brief mention in S. Paul and another in S. Luke ; we know nothing of its place, hour or details, but it cannot be passed over in silence.

And it is one of the best attested of all. On this subject Swete<sup>1</sup> writes : ‘ When, eight or nine years after the first Easter day, Paul went up to Jerusalem “ to visit Cephas,” who can doubt that the conversation turned on the appearances of the risen Lord ? Paul would have much to say of his experiences on the Damascus road, and Peter would tell how the Master had appeared to him on the very day of the Resurrection. “ He appeared to Cephas ” was thenceforth a prominent feature in the Gospel which S. Paul delivered to the Gentile churches.’

And this moral support was particularly necessary in Peter’s case. Like all the rest, he had been crushed by the catastrophe of Good Friday, but more than all the others he had felt the shame and grief of his fall. His mind was full of confusion at the thought of his obstinate protestations of fidelity in spite of the Master’s warnings, and of the presumption with which he had put himself above the rest. But, above all, he was overcome by poignant regret that, at the decisive hour, he had denied Him whom he had never ceased to love. And he was still overcome by the Master’s look as He passed through Caiphas’ court—the last look that he had received. And after that, this Christ to whom he had given himself with all the ardour of his nature had died without him, and indeed forsaken by him. And Peter felt the immense weight of his loneliness and his remorse. He had rejoined his friend John, and doubtless Mary, the Lord’s Mother ; but the Master Himself was no longer there.

At the Magdalen’s call, he had hurried to the tomb to look for Jesus, and wait upon Him once more. At the sight of the empty tomb and the folded linen John understood and believed ; but to reassure Peter, it needed our Lord Himself. Perhaps this appearance was granted to him on his return to Jerusalem, or at another visit to the tomb. We do not know, but at least we see here the fulfilment of Christ’s words at the Last Supper (Luke xxii, 32) : ‘ thou, being once converted, confirm thy brethren.’ The Apostles could not be convinced by Magdalen or by the holy women ; but they were convinced by Peter. In the evening when the disciples from Emmaus would reach the cenacle and relate what they had seen, they would find the Apostles already

<sup>1</sup> *The Appearances of Our Lord after the Passion* (London, 1907), p. 14.

persuaded (Luke xxiv, 34) : ' The Lord is risen indeed and hath appeared to Simon.'

The story of the appearance to the disciples at Emmaus (Luke xxiv, 13-35) is among the most detailed and interesting in the whole Gospel. In the first place it confirms what we have already learnt from the history of the Passion, namely, that for the last few weeks of our Lord's life, S. Luke had acquired and used a source peculiar to himself. Without excluding other witnesses, we may conjecture with great probability that one of the authors of the narratives contained in this source was Cleophas, one of the travellers to Emmaus, who is mentioned by S. Luke himself. Emmaus was easily reached from Cæsarea, where S. Luke passed two years with S. Paul, who was a prisoner at the time.<sup>1</sup>

Another observation, on a point of great significance, is suggested to us by this narrative. The apostolic catechesis throws little light on any except Christ Himself and the little apostolic band. Around them we feel the presence of the crowd, pressing around Jesus and then forsaking Him, but for us they are scarcely more than a nameless and silent group. What S. Luke tells us about the disciples introduces us to a circle of adherents a little less closely connected and privileged than the Apostles, but it does not acquaint us with these disciples by name. Here, two of them appear and make themselves known. And in them we recognize the characteristics already familiar to us from the history of the Apostles themselves : a passionate attachment to our Blessed Lord but, at the same time, too worldly a messianic faith, restricting their horizon and imperilling their hope : ' Jesus of Nazareth was a prophet mighty in work and word before God and all the people ' ; ' we hoped that it was He who should have redeemed Israel.' It is this ardent but obscure faith that we have so often met with already among the Apostles of Jesus, and we have remarked it too, although less vivid and less profound, among the Judean crowds. Now we come across it again at Emmaus, and by a fact that once more confirms the historical value of S. John's account of the evangelization of Judea.

<sup>1</sup> The situation of Emmaus is still keenly discussed. Dalman (*Itinéraires*, pp. 297-307) upholds the identification of Emmaus with Nicopolis. P. Viaud defends the view that it is the same as Qoubeibêh : *Qoubeibêh, Emmaus évangélique* (Jerusalem, 1930) ; this is rejected by Vincent : *Les monuments de Qoubeibêh* (*Revue biblique*, 1931, pp. 57-91).

Cleophas and his friend, then, left Jerusalem on the evening of the Passover. While on their way back to Emmaus, they conversed together with great animation, and as this increased they stopped and stood still in the road. A Passer-by joined them, and seeing them obviously so keenly engrossed in their discussion, He asked : ' What are these discourses that you hold one with another and are sad ? ' Without being astonished at this intervention, which the customs of the country made in no way unusual, the two travellers were certainly surprised at the Stranger's ignorance, and proceeded to tell Him of their great hopes and their terrible reverse. ' O foolish and slow of heart to believe ! ' This exclamation, recorded by S. Luke, remained, beyond all question, deeply graven on Cleophas' heart. ' Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and so to enter into His glory ? ' The divine plan had often been unfolded by Christ during His mortal life, and always in the form that we find here : Christ *ought* to suffer. . . . No doubt there is no question of a blind fatality, but of the Father's will, freely and lovingly accepted by the Son : He must triumph over evil, not crushing it by violence, but overcoming it by patience ; thus laying open to us all the way of salvation and life. The prophets already had known and revealed this divine plan, and our Lord quotes their testimony, from Moses to the very least among their number. The details of the argument have not been handed down to us by the evangelist, but the theme is of the greatest interest to us in itself. In the earliest days of the Church, S. Peter, S. Paul and all the Apostles would rest upon the Old Testament their demonstration of the Christian Faith. But this apologetic method was used before they adopted it, having been employed by Christ Himself. So it was that in His mortal life He had said : ' Search the scriptures . . . the same are they that give testimony of Me.'

Moved and touched, but not as yet fully enlightened, Cleophas and his friend reach Emmaus at last. The Stranger showed an inclination to pursue His journey, but already it was late, and beyond the great plain of Saron, stretching before them, the sun was setting over the sea. ' Stay with us, for it is towards evening and the day is now far spent.' They insisted, and the Traveller yielded to their importunate request. They entered the house, where a modest meal was soon prepared. It was the second day



of the Passover Week, and loaves of unleavened bread were upon the table. Of these the Visitor took one, blessed it, broke it, and offered it to His hosts. This right of blessing and distributing the loaves belonged to the master of the house ; and in truth it was the Master that was before them, the Lord Himself. They recognized Him at last ; but in that very moment could see Him no more ; He had vanished from their sight.

He was no longer before their eyes, but their hearts were touched by His loving influence still. Full of emotion, the disciples said to each other : ' Was not our heart burning within us, whilst He spoke in the way, and opened to us the Scriptures ? ' And these men, so depressed a few moments before, got up at once to return to Jerusalem and to tell the Apostles all that had occurred. Would they be welcomed like the women ? They never gave the matter a thought ; faith and love are divine forces that no incredulity can destroy. But when they arrived they found the Apostles already convinced : ' The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.' And straightway, with all the emotion of disciples in whom faith had just been re-born, and who had just discovered their living Saviour, when they had thought Him dead, they told the story of the encounter on the road, the long conversation and the breaking of the bread.

Night had already fallen, and it was dark in the cenacle, as it had been three days before, when Jesus rose to go to His death ; hope revived, but without as yet allaying all perplexities, or calming every fear. The door was shut ' for fear of the Jews ' ; and suddenly Jesus was there.

This appearance to the ten Apostles is described by S. Luke (xxiv, 19-23 ; cp. John xx, 19-23) with the same richness of detail as that at Emmaus, and comes manifestly from the same source. Into this cenacle, so well barricaded against the Jews, Jesus suddenly appeared standing, the disciples at first being thrown into a state of alarm, just as months before, when they had seen Him walking on the sea, they had been afraid : ' It is an apparition ' (*φάντασμα*, Matt. xiv, 26). Now His entrance into this closed room is equally disconcerting, since it comes at a time when they were overcome by His death and only half reassured by the stories that Peter and Cleophas had to tell. Was it indeed He ? It was a question they could not help but ask. So

with the loving condescension of a father, Jesus let Himself be seen and touched. The glorious martyr S. Ignatius of Antioch recalled this scene in his letter to the Smyrniotes : ' Take,' said Jesus to the Apostles, ' and touch Me and see that I am not a disembodied ghost.' And the better to convince them, He made use of the remains of their supper, a little broiled fish, and ate it before them.

All these hesitations can be understood easily enough. After the terrible catastrophe of two days ago, the Resurrection was so great a joy for the Apostles that they could not believe in their own happiness. Our Lord's love lent itself to all their needs and, moreover, He knew well that He was thus anticipating our own unbelief. For all men, the victory over death is so unexpected a thing that it needs the touch of the finger to create belief.

' Peace be to you ! ' This form of greeting, used by all Jews, was dear to our Lord. But He could give it its full value, transforming it from an empty wish into the expression of a divine gift. But to-day of all days, He was bent on giving His Apostles a foretaste of that peace which He had lately won. By His death He had brought peace to all in heaven and earth, and by His Resurrection He gave us the most certain pledge of reconciliation with Almighty God. God's just wrath was appeased, and so our Lord twice repeated the words : ' Peace be to you ! ' And then immediately He went on : ' As the Father hath sent Me, I also send you.' Soon He would be ascending to heaven, or rather He had done so already, as He had intimated to Mary Magdalen that very morn. But His work on earth was not finished yet ; He would perpetuate it through the Apostles and the Church.

Then He added : ' Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them : and whose sins you shall retain they are retained.' In the Temple, some months before, Christ had promised that the belly of the believer should become a fountain of living water which, S. John (vii, 39) tells us, ' He said of the Spirit which they should receive who believed in Him : for as yet the Spirit was not given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.' Now Christ *had* been glorified by His death and Resurrection, and already He was beginning to give the Holy Ghost to His faithful. As on the day of the Creation Jehovah had quickened all flesh by breathing and pouring

out His Spirit upon it (Gen. ii, 7), so at the beginning of this new creation Jesus breathed upon His Apostles and gave them the Holy Ghost. But all this was but the first-fruits of what they were to receive later on. And so our Lord added : ' I send the promise of My Father upon you : but stay you in the city until you be endued with power from on high.'

The first gift of the Holy Ghost thus bestowed upon the Apostles was the power to forgive sins. From the very beginning of His public ministry at Capharnaum this divine power had been solemnly claimed by Christ for Himself : ' . . . that you may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins (then said He to the man sick of the palsy) : Arise, take up thy bed, and walk.' Just as His own mission was to be perpetuated in the person of His Apostles, so His powers were placed in their hands. What, under the Old Law, had been the prerogative neither of patriarch, prophet or High Priest, every priest of Christ will possess to the end of the world : ' Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them : and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained.' Truly a power divine promised first to Peter (Matt. xvi, 19), then to the whole Church (xviii, 18), and now actually entrusted to their hands. So passed the first Easter Day. Scarcely a few hours ago all seemed lost—the Lord's work in ruins and He Himself lying dead ; while faith and hope had perished in the Apostles' hearts. Now all lives again. The risen Christ is laying the foundation of the Church, and the Apostles, restored and for ever fortified in the Faith, will be its immovable supports.

But one of them was slower to believe. Absent on this occasion, it would be another eight hours before a fresh appearance would give the death-blow to his doubts.<sup>1</sup> ' I will strike the shepherd and the sheep of the flock shall be dispersed.' The prophet's words, recalled by Jesus on the way to His death, were indeed fulfilled on that terrible night. Bereft of their Head and Guide, the eleven were scattered indeed. But on Easter Day they were nearly all united once more, and to them the Lord's promise was made real, that where two or three were gathered together in His name He would be in the midst. Only Thomas persisted in his solitude and discouragement, untouched as

<sup>1</sup> John xx, 24-9.

yet by the light of the risen Christ. At last he joined the rest who, full of joy, told him what they had seen, heard and touched. He listened, but remained unconvinced ; only ready to yield to evidence personal and direct. This stubbornness will not surprise us overmuch if we recall two other incidents recorded of S. Thomas by S. John. When Jesus, summoned by Martha and Mary, set out to go to Lazarus at Bethania, and the Apostles were terrified at the risk, it was Thomas who said : ' Let us go also, that we may die with Him ' (xi, 16). He was faithful and generous, but without hope. Again during the discourse after the Last Supper, when our Lord told the eleven : ' Whither I go you know, and the way you know,' Thomas replied : ' Lord, we know not whither Thou goest ; and how can we know the way ? ' (xiv, 4).

Always the same spirit, straight and loyal, but narrow, fearing above all to make changes or to indulge in dreams. Upon our Lord's death his horizon, already limited, closed in altogether ; before him was only black night, with nothing to hope for. Still, he loved his Master and his brethren all the time, and after isolating himself for some days he came back to them once more. He found them radiant with happiness, but he was shocked alike by their joy and their faith. He claimed to be able to see clearly, and was not going to let a blind enthusiasm carry him away. No doubt, too, his natural pessimism was intensified by some degree of remorse. This apparition which was described to him with so much insistence, and in which he could not believe, the others had seen when they were fraternally gathered together, with Mary, in this cenacle where they were living now. Why was he not there with them too ? Why had he kept himself apart ? Perhaps the others reproached him with it ; certainly he silently reproached himself, but he clung stubbornly to the attitude he had taken up ; eight days passed like this, and the joy of the apostolic college was marred by his sulky unbelief.

And then suddenly Jesus was in the midst of His disciples, as He had been eight days before. There was the same greeting : ' Peace be to you,' and then turning at once to Thomas our Lord bade him : ' Put in thy finger hither and see My hands. And bring hither thy hand and put it into My side,' adding with fatherly tenderness but insistently all the same : ' be not faithless, but believing.' At that

decisive moment, Thomas might have remained stubborn still, like so many who had witnessed the raising of Lazarus from the dead ; but if his soul was embittered and his spirit narrow, his heart was loyal. He gave himself to Christ afresh, and his zeal, stirred up by grace, carried him right through to nothing less than what had been Peter's own confession : ' My Lord and my God.'

And Jesus replied : ' Because thou hast seen Me, Thomas, thou hast believed ; blessed are they that have not seen and have believed.' That blessedness would be that of the Apostle's disciples, and it is ours to-day. S. Peter would write to the Christians of Asia Minor :

' Whom having not seen, you love : in whom also now, though you see Him not, you believe, and believing, shall rejoice with joy unspeakable and glorified.' (1 Peter i, 8.)

How many generations have passed since then ! Every Christian, without seeing Christ, has laid at His feet the gift of whole-hearted faith, and the whole Church, without seeing Him either, repeats S. Thomas' words : ' My Lord and my God.'

### III. *The Appearances in Galilee.*

When the angels appeared to the holy women, they bade them (Mark xvi, 7) : ' Go . . . tell His disciples and Peter that He goeth before you into Galilee. There you shall see Him, as He told you.'<sup>1</sup>

If we had before our eyes only these passages of S. Mark and S. Matthew, we might have concluded that all our Lord's appearances to the Apostles took place in Galilee. As a matter of fact, such are the only ones recorded in the first two Gospels, if we leave out of account the conclusion of S. Mark, the authenticity of which has been called in question. On the other hand, in S. Luke and S. John we find the detailed account of the appearances at Jerusalem. It may therefore be asked if in these two groups of narratives we are to see two contradictory and successive traditions. Many radical critics<sup>2</sup> take this view, which they make the starting-point of their own theory on the subject. In this

<sup>1</sup> In Matthew we read that Jesus Himself told the holy women : ' Go tell My brethren that they go into Galilee. There they shall see Me.'

<sup>2</sup> Cp. L. de Grandmaison, II, pp. 413 ff. ; Ladeuze, *La Résurrection de Jésus Christ*, pp. 40 ff.

view, immediately after the Passover the Apostles returned to Galilee. There was nothing to recall the disaster of Calvary ; while everything tended to revive the impression made by the preaching of our Lord.

Under this influence, all the memory of the past—so dear and so soon shattered—stole back into their hearts ; their wounded hope revived, creating the object upon which it was to feed. So they imagined they saw the living Christ, and later began to relate His appearances as actual facts, which in this first period they localized in Galilee itself. Meanwhile, to supply a solid foundation for this fragile structure, they imagined the discovery of the empty tomb and the appearances to the holy women, finally placing these in Jerusalem, and on the Passover day itself. Later on they tried to harmonize the two traditions by representing the appearances in Jerusalem as following on those in Galilee.

The whole theory is only a play of fancy, the exact opposite of the facts. Of these the most certain and tangible is the existence of the Christian Church in Jerusalem itself, so soon after the death of Christ. Only fifty days after Easter came Pentecost. There were the Apostles all together in Jerusalem, wholly united in the same faith. It may well be asked : How is this faith and this reunion to be explained coming so soon after our Lord's death, in Jerusalem, and not in Galilee at all ? In its present form S. Paul's testimony takes us back to A.D. 55-57 and its sources go back more than twenty years further still, that is, to the very first years of the Christian Church. Now S. Paul tells us : ' . . . He rose again the third day, according to the scriptures : and . . . . He was seen by Cephas ; and after that by the twelve.' The appearances here referred to are most probably those occurring at Jerusalem ; the identification seeming particularly certain in the case of the appearance to S. Peter, if we compare this passage of S. Paul with the text of his companion and disciple S. Luke. If now we consider this same Gospel of S. Luke independently of all comparison with S. Paul, we notice in the Resurrection narratives, as in those of the Passion, the use of a source at once very ancient, accurate and in every way worthy of faith, preserving a tradition of Judea and, more precisely, of Jerusalem itself. And to all this must be added the testimony of S. John, an eye-witness and an Apostle at that.

All this is superabundant proof that our Lord's appearances at Jerusalem are attested not by a legend arising later in the heart of the Christian communities, but by quite early testimony, well worthy of belief.

To refute this evidence something more is wanted than the mere silence of S. Matthew and S. Mark, a silence which, in any case, a careful study of the Gospels enables us easily to understand. It is not only a question of our Lord's glorified life, but of His whole ministry, which these two evangelists represent as being wholly confined to Galilee, the events in Jerusalem being passed over in almost complete silence, without being referred to at all.

But, we may be told, it is not only their silence that is impressive, but the words which they ascribe to the angel and the risen Lord : 'Go . . . tell His disciples and Peter . . . that He goeth before you into Galilee. There you shall see Him, as He told you.' 'Go, tell my brethren that they go into Galilee . . . there they shall see Me.' Do not these words, we may be asked, show sufficiently clearly that, for the evangelists who record them, Galilee, and not Jerusalem, would be the scene where our Lord's appearances to the Apostles would take place? We acknowledge without difficulty that if we possessed no other evidence, we might conclude that Christ appeared to His Apostles in Galilee and nowhere else. But since we are told elsewhere of the appearances in Jerusalem, without doing violence to the passages in question, we are justified in taking them in another sense. These evangelists only intended to record the appearances in Galilee, and did so, passing over the rest without a word. And this preference can be explained in a very natural way. It was in Galilee that the most notable appearances of Christ took place, namely those which had many witnesses, and which were the occasion of teachings of a more explicit kind. At Jerusalem Christ restored His Apostles' faith, but it was in Galilee that He instructed them more fully of the Kingdom that He was founding and of the ministry that is to be theirs. S. Matthew, always so concerned with the establishment of the kingdom of God, and S. Mark with the training of the Apostles, were bound to lay special stress on teachings of this kind.

The Resurrection narratives furnish another very notable example of an omission of a similar kind. We refer to the fact that S. Luke passes directly from the appearance of

Easter Sunday evening to the Ascension, his words seeming to exclude any sort of intermediate stage. 'And He led them out as far as Bethania : and lifting up His hands He blessed them. And it came to pass while He blessed them He departed from them. . . .' If we had no other account than this, we should conclude that the Ascension took place on Easter Sunday. And yet it is the same S. Luke who wrote these lines who wrote also in the Acts : 'To whom also He showed Himself alive after His Passion, by many proofs, for forty days appearing to them and speaking of the kingdom of God.' He was perfectly aware of this fact when he wrote his Gospel, but, having lingered over the appearances at Jerusalem and especially that at Emmaus, of which he had first-hand information, he passed over in silence those occurring in Galilee, of which Matthew had already given an account.

As a matter of fact it is, once again, the first Gospel that furnishes us with the most explicit information about the Galilean ministry. But before going through this we must consider the beautiful story contained in the twenty-first chapter of S. John.<sup>1</sup>

This narrative, so detailed and full of precise and vivid memories, has a special interest for us, since it gives us a glimpse of the Apostles' life during these forty days. The other Resurrection stories depict their discouragement on the morrow of the Passion, and their joy at seeing Jesus again, leaving in obscurity the long intervals between one appearance and another. But on these this chapter of S. John throws a ray of light. Docile to their Master's orders, the Apostles had returned to Galilee, whither, in any case, everything tended to call them back. They knew that our Lord would rejoin them there, but were ignorant of the time or place. In spite of the joy of the Resurrection, and their faith regained, they are far from being quite themselves. For the first time since they heard the Master's call, they

<sup>1</sup> This long narrative of S. John's has no parallel in the Synoptic Gospels, but the apocryphal Gospel of Peter seems to have given some account of the incident with which it deals. The fragment we possess ends abruptly, at the beginning of a passage relating to the appearance of our Lord. 'We, the twelve disciples of the Lord, were in tears and mourning, and each of us, overcome with sorrow for what had befallen us, went back to his home. Now myself, Simon Peter, and my brother Andrew, taking our nets, set out towards the sea of Galilee, and with us was Levi, son of Alphaeus, whom the Lord . . .' Cp. Vaganay, *L'Evangile de Pierre*, p. 63.



found themselves there, in that Galilee which they had so often crossed and recrossed in company with Him, but now without a guide or definite purpose in view. The Sermon on the Mount, the parables, the long voyages on the lake, and across the hills and plains—all this was of the past, and a past which they had no power to make live again. Jesus is no longer there. Their work of preaching, their missions throughout Judea and the world, all that lay in the future; and they knew well that the time for it had not yet come. For that, they must receive Him whom the Father had promised: and they must do nothing until He came.

So, in this time of waiting, in which trouble might easily have arisen, Peter, man of action and chief of the apostolic band, turned once more to his old trade, thus inspiring the others to do the same. 'I go a-fishing. . . . We also come with thee.' And so they fished all night, without catching anything at all. No doubt they were reminded—and Peter especially—of the miraculous draught of fishes by which his own vocation had been decided, two or three years ago. But now Jesus was there no longer, and the work was once more tiring and fruitless, as in the worst days of the past.

At dawn, in the half-light, they could distinguish a Stranger standing on the shore whom they did not seem to know. 'Children,' He asked them, 'have you any meat?' They could only answer, 'No.' 'Cast your net on the right side of the ship and you shall find.' Perhaps the fishermen thought that from the shore the Stranger could see a school of fish hidden from their view, and then their life as disciples had made them docile. At any rate they obeyed, and when they wished to draw in the net, they found it so full that they could not get the catch into the boat.

'It is the Lord.' Here, again, John was the first to recognize his Master; but here, too, as at the tomb, Peter, informed by him, went first: more impulsive in action if less ready to observe. Girding his coat about him he threw himself into the sea, and was the first to reach the shore. There Jesus was awaiting His Apostles, and had already prepared for them a meal of bread and fish, while to complete the feast He suggests that they should eat some of their own fish, too. Then, once more, as during His mortal life, He took up His rôle of Master of the House, serving the food. They feasted their eyes upon Him, without

daring to ask who He was ; ‘ knowing that it was the Lord.’ In describing the scene near Jacob’s well, in the first weeks of Christ’s ministry, John had already remarked the respect of the disciples for their Master, and their reserve. Here that respect is greater still ; Jesus is still with them, but no longer of this world ; they feel more keenly than ever that there is a mystery about Him that is beyond their ken, and which they dare not seek to pierce.

So the meal comes to an end. Our Lord, always considerate of human weakness (cp. Mark v, 43), wished, first of all, to restore a little strength to the Apostles, tired out by their long night’s labour and fast. It was only after they were refreshed that He said to Simon Peter : ‘ Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me more than these ? ’ Notice that our Lord does not call the Apostle Peter, that name which his faith had merited, and of which his defection had made him unworthy, but, as in the first days of his apostolate, Simon, son of John. To this presumptuous disciple, so apt to put himself before the rest, He inquired : ‘ Lovest thou Me more than these ? ’ and He asks the question three times, so that by a threefold confession, Peter may efface his threefold denial. And Simon replied with touching humility, no longer comparing himself with anyone, but resting content with an appeal to Christ Himself : ‘ Thou knowest that I love Thee.’ But the third time the emotional strain was too great ; our Lord’s insistence grieved him and rendered keener still the memory of his presumption and his fall. ‘ Lord,’ he cried, ‘ thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee.’

The threefold confession was rewarded by threefold investiture. ‘ Feed My lambs : feed My sheep ’ ; and once again, ‘ feed My sheep.’ The Apostle who had fallen in the sight of the others was now restored before all and re-established in his rank of shepherd and head. And Jesus continues, calling up in the mind of the Galilean fisherman the free and independent life of his youth, and foretelling in veiled terms the prison, cross and death that were yet to be his. We feel that John has set down this prophecy just as it was graven in his memory, without wishing to make more definite the details that our Lord had purposely left vague : ‘ . . . thou shalt stretch forth thy hands and another shall gird thee and lead thee whither thou wouldst not.’

This terrible prospect in no way abated S. Peter's courage, nay, rather increased it ; but soon he thought of his companion and friend, and inquisitive as he had always been (cp. John xiii, 24), with all the unrestrained boldness of his character he asked Jesus : ' Lord, and what shall this man do ? ' But this sally is repressed, and the Master teaches him to follow Him simply, without aspiring to know the destiny of the others : ' So that I will to have him to remain till I come, what is that to thee ? Follow thou Me.' Between Christ and His faithful followers there are secrets that no human friendship, even of the saintliest kind, can ever pierce. Faced with the discontent of the workers of the first hour of the day, He asserted the utter freedom of His gifts, and in this case the mysteries and independence of His providence. The mysterious wording of our Lord's reply was the cause of a lasting misunderstanding, which S. John sets himself to clear up, although without throwing any light on what our Lord had deliberately left unrevealed.

No doubt it was shortly after this appearance that there occurred the glorious manifestation recorded by S. Matthew (xxviii, 16-20) :

' And the eleven disciples went into Galilee, unto the mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And seeing Him they adored : but some doubted. And Jesus coming, spoke to them, saying : All power is given to Me in heaven and in earth. Going therefore, teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. And behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.'

The mountain in question here is probably the steep bank of the lake. Our Lord had preached there many times, and S. Matthew makes it the scene of the Sermon on the Mount. There, then, Christ had once more fixed a meeting with His Apostles. Although Matthew does not explicitly mention this fact, no doubt it occurred at the first appearance at Jerusalem, which is confirmed by what is described here.

So the Apostles were all there, and some other disciples too, when Jesus suddenly appeared a little distance away. The Apostles prostrated themselves, an act of supreme

homage which they had rarely rendered to Christ in His mortal life. One such occasion is mentioned by S. Matthew (xiv, 33) as occurring on a day when amazement and admiration had overwhelmed the twelve. After the Resurrection their reverence is greater still ; they prostrated themselves and adored. But some hesitated still. They did not doubt that Jesus was risen from the dead, but they were not certain that this was He, and once again they were afraid that it was some spirit that they had before their eyes.

Then our Lord drew near and spoke to them, and there was a sovereign dignity about His words : ‘ All power is given to Me in heaven and in earth.’ Already in His mortal life Jesus had more than once affirmed that the Father had given everything to Him, but never before had He so explicitly asserted His supreme dominion over the whole world. It was by His death that He had won this empire for Himself, and now He had received its investiture through His rising from the dead. We may recall here that scene of superhuman grandeur with which the story of the public ministry practically begins—the struggle between Satan and Christ. In that temptation the supreme effort of the spirit of evil was to set the prospect of universal domination before our Lord, and to this end he showed Him all the kingdoms of the world. ‘ To Thee will I give all this power and the glory of them. For to me they are delivered.’ A sacrilegious claim indeed, and a lying promise ! But Christ’s humble obedience was to raise Him higher than is implied in any conception of this kind. ‘ He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even to the death of the Cross. For which cause God also hath exalted Him and hath given Him a name which is above all names, that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those that are in heaven, on earth, and under the earth.’

Nor has He received this universal power over men for any other reason than to save them ; nor does He claim it here except as the basis of authority for His Apostles’ mission in the world. ‘ Going, teach ye all nations.’ During His mortal life He bade them preach only to the Israelites, leaving the Samaritans and Gentiles untouched. But now the hour of salvation was come for all : and from His Cross He attracts and draws to Himself the whole world. And if confirmation were needed of this mighty power of His,

here are these poor men whom He is letting loose upon the world, feeble instruments indeed, but charged with sovereign strength ; earthen vessels, but carrying treasure all the same. And it is by baptism that He will pour out this grace from above, baptism in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

For the Precursor, this had been the rite by which he brought his disciples, if not into the kingdom of God, at least into the ways that led to it. During the first few months of His ministry, in Judea, Christ had not Himself baptized, but through His disciples ; and in Galilee we find no further trace of baptism at all. The only formality in becoming a Christian, was adhesion to Christ ; a man followed Him, and became His disciple forthwith. But now Jesus is about to disappear ; and union with Him, the indispensable source of life, will no longer be appreciable by the senses, except through the Sacraments, those visible and efficacious signs that He was leaving to His Church. These would not be rites and ceremonies alone, as John's baptism was, but sources of life and grace.

Christian baptism would be conferred in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Elsewhere<sup>1</sup> we have proved that this precept of Christ, here recorded, really came from Him and was not, as in the view of some radical authors, a liturgical formula, incorporated in the Gospel later on. We have remarked also that the text does not necessarily imply a ritual precept, since it may be understood of the consecration of the baptized person to the three Persons of the Godhead.<sup>2</sup> In any case, we shall see in these words of our Lord the crown and summary of all His teaching about God. From the very beginning He preached faith in the Heavenly Father ; then, little by little, He revealed the Son in His own Person, whose knowledge, power and nature are the knowledge, power and nature of the Father Himself. In His last conversations with them He had announced to His Apostles the coming of the Holy Ghost, and had impressed upon them that this other Paraclete, whom He would send on His Father's behalf, would complete in them the work and revelation that He Himself had begun, and would dwell in them by the same title as the Father and the Son. Father, Son and Holy

<sup>1</sup> *Histoire du Dogme de la Trinité*, I, pp. 599-610, n. E.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, I, pp. 339 ff., and Swete, p. 75.

Ghost, heavenly Guests of the soul, would come there by baptism. They would be there as the Friend who sustains and consoles, as the fountain of the water of Life, as the God whom we adore.

This revelation, noted so briefly in this verse of the Gospel, was to be the consummation of all the teaching of Christ. The Jews had known God by His external action alone, worshipping Him from afar with faces veiled. Now the veil is rent by the Son Himself, and by Him Christians are introduced into the Holy of holies, into those mysteries of the intimate life of God into which none had ever penetrated before. And this revelation is by Him closely linked with baptism. When, later, heretics would seek to obscure or deform the Christian Faith, the Church would only have to appeal to this institution of our Lord, and in this Sacrament, the only and indispensable source of all justification, she would find the authentic and irreformable formula of her faith.

Then Jesus went on to command His Apostles to teach their disciples everything that He had taught them, adding : ‘ . . . I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.’ It was not the first time that He had promised His perpetual presence to His people. Already, long before, He had assured them that whenever two or three were gathered together in His name He would be in the midst ; and, at the Last Supper, that He would not leave His Apostles orphans. But the promise recorded here has a different significance altogether. He is not giving them a consolation, but a solemn guarantee. He was about to entrust to them a mission above their unaided strength, nothing less than the conversion of the whole world ; and in this undertaking He would not forsake them, but would be with them to the end of the world. So it was that after Moses had said to Jehovah (Exod. iii, 11) : ‘ Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt ? ’ that God answered : ‘ I will be with thee.’ The whole history of the Exodus is confirmation of Jehovah’s words. But as for us, we have something better than the Exodus. The history of twenty centuries shows us Christ living in His Church, and in spite of the wretchedness and unworthiness of its members, propagating its life, maintaining its unity and causing it to bring forth holiness in abundant fruit.

IV. *The Ascension.*

After this sojourn in Galilee, the Apostles returned to Jerusalem, where for the last time Jesus came among them, and shared their humble meal. He exhorted them not to leave Jerusalem, but to await the fulfilment of the Father's promise, the baptism of the Holy Ghost. For their part, haunted, as always, by their messianic dreams, they asked Him once more : ' Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel ? ' Gently, Jesus refuses to gratify their curiosity and calls their attention back to His promises once more :

' It is not for you to know the times or moments, which the Father hath put in His own power. But you shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you, and you shall be witnesses unto Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the uttermost part of the earth.' (Acts i, 7, 8.)

Conversing in this way, ' He led them out as far as Bethania, and lifting up His hands He blessed them : and while He blessed them . . . He was carried up into heaven.' ' And a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they were beholding Him going up into heaven, behold two men stood by them in white garments. Who also said : Ye men of Galilee, why stand you looking up into heaven ? This Jesus who is taken from you into heaven shall so come as you have seen Him going into heaven.' ' And they adoring went back into Jerusalem with great joy.'<sup>1</sup>

For the first Christians, this story of the triumph of Jesus was indeed a source of joy and hope ; and it finds an echo in many a passage in S. Paul's epistles, and elsewhere.<sup>2</sup>

The Apostles' Creed, in its most ancient form, affirms the fact of the Ascension equally with that of the Resurrection, and it must be acknowledged that the two mysteries are so closely bound together, both in Biblical literature

<sup>1</sup> Luke xxiv, 50-3 ; Acts i, 1-9. Cp. Mark xvi, 19.

<sup>2</sup> Eph. iv, 8-10 represents Christ as ' He . . . that ascended above the heavens ' ; Heb. iv, 14, He ' hath passed into the heavens ' ; vii, 26, He ' is made higher than the heavens ' ; 1 Tim. iii, 16, He ' is taken up in glory ' ; 1 Pet. iii, 22, He ' is gone into heaven ' and ' is on the right hand of God.'

and Christian faith that, if one be rejected, the other must share the same fate.

None the less, it is equally true that this mystery is a stumbling-block to many minds to-day.<sup>1</sup>

But there is nothing to justify uneasiness of this kind. It is partly to be explained by the legendary descriptions with which the scriptural narrative has been disfigured at times. In such literature, Christ has been represented as traversing in succession all the celestial circles, to reach, at last, the very throne of God. Evidently, in the Christian revelations, we shall search for imaginations of this kind in vain. The nearest parallels to them are to be found in the phantasies with which the various Apocalypses are full: for example, the description of the seven heavens in the *Ascension of Isaias*. In the Acts there is nothing of the sort, and that fact in itself forms a notable contrast between the two literatures, one apocryphal and the other inspired. On the one hand is all the sobriety of an historical narrative; on the other the capricious inventions of an imagination giving itself full rein.<sup>2</sup>

In the narratives of S. Luke and S. Mark we find nothing but the following story, sober and impressive in the extreme. The eleven accompany their Master to the Mount of Olives, where they suddenly see Him rising from among them, soon hidden by a cloud from their sight, and that is all. Of His triumphant ascension, of the mysterious heavens through which He passed, there is not a word. All that they have to say about this event is merely what they saw, and what they have heard. They saw Jesus ascend to heaven; and one day they would see Him come down in the same way.

The short passage that precedes the story of the Ascension, and serves as an introduction to it, serves to accentuate the simplicity and reality of the account. Jesus took a meal with His Apostles, when He commanded them to remain in Jerusalem until they received the Holy Ghost. Still preoccupied by those political aspirations which so far had

<sup>1</sup> Swete, 105: 'The Ascension presents to many minds to-day a difficulty even greater than the Resurrection. It seems to conflict with even an elementary knowledge of physics.'

<sup>2</sup> The book *The Ascension of Isaias* is not alone in this respect; in the literature of the first two centuries the seven heavens are described with equal complacency in *The Secrets of Henoch*, in *The Testament of Levi* (Tisserant, *Ascension d'Isaie*, pp. 15-16), and the same in *Hagigah*, 12b; *Aboth de R. Nathan*, xxxvii, 8.



embittered their whole life, the Apostles asked their Master : ' Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel ? ' He contented Himself with replying : ' It is not for you to know the times or moments, which the Father hath put in His own power.' But the vision of the Mount of Olives would disillusion them more than this reply. ' My kingdom is not of this world,' our Lord had said. Then, the Apostles could make nothing of His words. They understood better now, when they saw their Master leave the earth and ascend into the skies. Yes, truly, His kingdom is not of this world, for it is the kingdom of heaven.

And still more than His work on earth is His very Person illuminated by the light that the great mystery of the Ascension sheds. ' You are from beneath : I am from above,' Jesus had said to the Jews (John viii, 23) ; and to Nicodemus : ' . . . no man hath ascended into heaven, but He that descended from heaven, the Son of Man . . . ' (iii, 13). And again in His great discourse at Capharnaum (vi, 62) : ' Doth this scandalize you ? If then you shall see the Son of Man ascend up where He was before ? ' All these sayings, scattered here and there in the teaching of our Lord, would be concentrated in the Apostle's doctrine of the supernatural man, but much better still can they be understood in the radiant light of the Ascension. Truly, Jesus is from heaven. It was from thence He came, as it is there He will remain for evermore.

And for the Apostles there could have been no more expressive symbol than the cloud in which He disappeared. It was in a cloud that God appeared of old, and from a cloud that He made Himself heard at the baptism and transfiguration of our Lord. It is in a cloud that He will appear to us at the last day. A cloud ! That is the mysterious veil of God, behind which He hides Himself from human eyes. That veil would from henceforth envelop the Lord Jesus, and it is through this mystery that our faith will reach Him until the day when He admits us into the secret of His countenance.

And into heaven He has taken with Him every Christian heart, another lesson also drawn from these mysteries by S. Paul :

' . . . if you be risen with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God.

Mind the things that are above, not the things that are upon the earth.' (Col. iii, 1-2.)

But before Paul, this had been the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount, where the Christian's thoughts, care and love are all for His Father, who is in heaven. But how all such teaching has now acquired far greater force ! For in heaven the Christian seeks and loves not only the Heavenly Father, but his Lord and Master, who has gone above before him, who awaits him there, and who is preparing for him a place.

And so this great mystery necessarily transfigures all that we know about our Blessed Lord.

In the course of this book we have followed Him stage by stage, hearing His words and trying to understand Him better, that we may follow Him more closely and love Him more. This whole study of ours will have served no useful purpose whatever, if it has not raised us with Him from earth to heaven. If we would merely approach Christ and, like the Magdalen, seize and clasp His sacred Feet, He will say to us as He did to her : ' Do not touch Me, for I am not yet ascended to My Father.' But if, after watching His ascent into heaven, we seek to follow Him there, we shall possess Him for eternity, and nothing can ever loosen our grip. Let us say with S. Paul (2 Cor. v, 16) : ' Wherefore, henceforth, we know no man according to the flesh. And if we have known Christ according to the flesh : but now we know Him so no longer.' The men of His country and time saw and heard Him according to the flesh, and they remained blind and deaf. They felt the power of His miracles upon them, they were healed by His touch, they were thrilled at His words ; yet their flesh, quickened for a moment, falls back into death, and their hearts, touched for an instant, are hardened anew. Truly, indeed, the flesh profiteth nothing, while the spirit quickeneth.

And we, who have not seen the Son of Man at all, are happier, since we believe in Him and it is by His Spirit that we live. So let us follow the Apostles as they descended from the Mount of Olives full of joy and hope ; like them, let us take up our abode in the cenacle with Mary, the Mother of our Lord. Then, at the breath of the Spirit, will be born the Church in which Christ will live for evermore.

May this intimate knowledge of the living Christ be the fruit of our study ; that is our only goal. ' This is eternal

life : that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.'

In the course of these chapters we have spoken of Judea, its history, customs and religion ; and, certainly, it was with great affection that we contemplated this Holy Land where our Redeemer lived. Its very stones are dear to us, 'placuerunt servis tuis lapides eius.' We have never forgotten the day when from the height of Mount Scopus we looked on Jerusalem for the last time. 'If I forget thee, Jerusalem, let my right hand be forgotten.' And yet this Holy City is merely the frame : it is only the picture that really matters at all.

With still more veneration have we studied the inspired books that record the teaching and life of Christ. Beyond all doubt it is a precious branch of knowledge—this science of the Word of God. And yet, if we compare it to the knowledge of God's Son, it is nothing but a providential means to an infinitely higher end. It belongs to the order of faith, that is to an order of an essentially provisional kind. Amidst the darkness in which we live here below it is the light that guides us towards Jesus and His Father, God. But in the splendour of heaven all such torches will be extinguished. There, S. John tells us, we shall have no more need of any light but that of the Lamb ; it will be the brightness, radiant, eternal, of the City of God.

It is to that glory that from now onwards we must lift our eyes. Sometimes, perhaps, we feel a little saddened when, on Ascension Day, after the Gospel, the paschal candle is put out ; Christ has left us for heaven above. Let the example of the Apostles train us in sentiments of a different kind. At the Ascension they lost all visible support, yet they came down from the Mount of Olives full of joy, for they remembered the Master's words : 'If you loved Me you would indeed be glad because I go to My Father.' And indeed they did love Him, and rejoiced, and they thought of those other words of His : 'I go to prepare a place for you.' Formerly, in the days when they shared the work of preaching the Gospel with Christ, it was they who were charged by Him with the work of making preparations in advance ; so, for example, did Peter and John make ready the cenacle at Jerusalem on the eve of the great day. Now, the only resting-place to which they look is the heavenly cenacle, and it is the Master Himself who has gone to set

things in order there. And there we, too, have our place ; and it is only to secure it for us that our Lord has left us at all. And He is still present among us, in the Holy Eucharist, in our souls, urging us on that we may join Him once more above. When all is silent within us, He lifts His voice, and in the depths of our hearts repeats His words, spoken to S. Ignatius of Antioch of old : ‘ Come above, come to the Father.’ Let that voice speak to us, and all else be silent. Soon the voices of men will reach us no more, the Gospels themselves are but an echo, destined to die away : but if we have loved and followed Him and listened to His words here below, the Voice of Christ will sound in our ears through the endless ages of eternal life.

## EPILOGUE

### THE FRUITS OF CHRIST'S MINISTRY. THE REVELATION OF THE SON OF GOD

#### *I. Belief and Unbelief. The Grace of Calvary.*

ONCE again we have been through the life and teaching of our Blessed Lord ; and we may ask ourselves if its mystery is even yet wholly within our grasp. Assuredly not, for it will always be infinitely beyond the infirmity of our poor minds ; the least we can say is that we have felt its attraction, and that we desire to penetrate still further into its depths. To do that effectively it will be useful for us to consider, in the light of the Gospel, the revelation of the Son of God and the welcome it has received. We have seen something of the different reactions of the enthusiastic but fickle crowd, the jealous Pharisees, the disciples, the Apostles giving themselves generously to our Lord without at first abandoning their dreams. All this will help us to understand more easily what it was that the Saviour put before His disciples, the doctrine He taught, the mystery He set Himself to reveal, and above all the imperative necessity of inner light, and of grace, that alone can touch and convert the heart.

If we read the Gospel story carefully, it would seem that from the very beginning Jesus drew souls whole-heartedly to Himself. First, His Apostles ; at His call they left all to follow Him. We called attention to S. Jerome's expressive comment, in which these sudden vocations are justified and explained (P.L., XXVI, 56) : ' The glory and majesty of that veiled divinity that shone through all His human features had the power to attract those who saw Him, from the very first.' So powerful was this attraction that it drew even imprudent disciples, presuming too much on their own strength, and necessarily dismissed by our Lord : ' I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.' ' The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests ; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head ' (Luke ix, 57, 58).

And it was the same with the crowds. They admired the authority of this teaching, so different from that of the scribes (Matt. vii, 29) ; they relished the charm of Jesus' gracious words (Luke iv, 22) ; while even the most prejudiced cried : ' Never did man speak like this Man ' (John vii, 46). They followed Him into the desert, forgetting even to eat and drink, five thousand at one time, and three thousand at another. Nor did the enthusiasm last for only a few weeks ; rather it went on throughout the whole of the ministry of Christ. During His last journey, we saw Him going up to Jerusalem, followed by a great multitude and sending out His seventy disciples across Perea, as formerly He had sent His twelve Apostles through Galilee ; the entry to Jerusalem to the cries of Hosanna, being, of this long mission, only the triumphal close. And yet five days later, all is dispelled ; and we cannot help thinking of the house built on the sand, carried away by the wind and rain. What is perhaps still more striking, the Resurrection itself only restored these ruins to a very imperfect extent ; on the day of Pentecost there were gathered in the cenacle one hundred and twenty persons in all.

Nor were the Apostles under any delusion as to all this. One of our first impressions in opening the Gospels is that of sadness at the scanty recognition that the Word of God received : ' He came unto His own : and His own received Him not ' (John i, 11) ; and we meet the same melancholy appreciation of the facts towards the end of the Gospel, in the story of the last week. ' And whereas He had done so many miracles before them, they believed not in Him ' (John xii, 37). For S. John, as for S. Paul (Acts xxviii, 26-27), aye, and for our Lord Himself (Matt. xiii, 14-15), it was the mystery of the blindness foretold by Isaias :

' And He said : Go, and thou shalt say to this people : Hearing hear and understand not : and see the vision and know it not. Blind the heart of this people, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes : lest they see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and be converted, and I heal them.' (Isa. vi, 9, 10.)

We are, therefore, driven to ask what was wanting to these crowds with their enthusiasm, and even to the disciples with all their generous devotion, in order to make their

faith enlightened and strong. We must seek the answer in the Gospel itself ; and some of our Lord's sayings, as also of the evangelists, and especially S. John, might well suffice. But we shall understand the case better if we consider certain scenes in which the character of Christ's hearers is clearly seen.<sup>1</sup>

Our attention is first drawn to the miracles of our Lord. He Himself often appealed to their testimony, and we notice, in S. John especially, how powerfully the impression produced by them helped to win the adhesion of the disciples and the crowds. But, unfortunately, in many cases, their effect seemed not to have gone beyond a passing emotion ; astonishment, admiration, gratitude at the most.

We may mention first, without lingering over it, the too-frequent case of miracles which produced no sort of religious effect. Those for whom they were worked saw in them a favour and not a token ; they benefited by them, without receiving any light :

‘ Jesus answered them and said : Amen, amen, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you have seen miracles, but because you did eat of the loaves and were filled.’ (John vi, 26.)

And it was the case with the nine lepers in the way, with their minds set only on their regained health, going away without the thought of giving thanks to the miracle-worker even entering their minds (Luke xvii, 17).

Others, less thoughtless, recognized in our Lord's action the effect of a supernatural force ; but, as His implacable enemies, they would see in Him nothing but an agent of the devil : ‘ He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils He casteth out Beelzebub ’ (Mark iii, 22). So often did the Pharisees repeat this odious calumny that we find its echo at the Feast of Tabernacles, in Jerusalem itself (John viii, 48). However, only those of Christ's opponents who were carried away by rage or hatred could go so far as that.

The majority recognized in our Lord's miracles a supernatural force, which they revered and admired. So, at Naim, those who saw the young man raised from the dead were filled with fear and glorified God (Luke vii, 16). After

<sup>1</sup> On this grave question may be profitably consulted A. Charue, *L'Incrédulité des Juifs dans le Nouveau Testament* (Gembloux, Duculot, 1929).

the raising of Jairus' daughter, her relations 'were astonished' (Luke viii, 56). And, later, when Jesus was crossing Decapolis, doing many miracles by the way, 'so much the more did they wonder, saying : He hath done all things well. He hath made both the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak' (Mark vii, 37).

This keen religious emotion, which seemed to be frequent enough, more usually aroused only sentiments of joy, admiration or surprise. Sometimes it brought with it a new light, but very weak and wavering still. 'When the Christ cometh, shall he do more miracles than these which this man doth?' (John vii, 31). Sometimes they did not even go so far as that, but merely 'glorified God that gave such power to men' (Matt. ix, 8). With the Apostles, on several occasions, we do find the same sentiments illumined by a more penetrating insight into the inner meaning of events. So S. Peter, after the miraculous draught of fishes, falls at our Lord's feet with the words : 'Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord' (Luke v, 8). So, again, after the first stilling of the tempest on the lake, 'they feared exceedingly. And they said one to another : Who is this (thinkest thou) that both wind and sea obey Him?' (Mark iv, 41). This time, as often, this vivid impression of power and mystery followed a moment of discouragement and distrust. Seeing Jesus asleep with His head on the pillow, they awoke Him with the cry : 'Master, doth it not concern Thee that we perish?' And Jesus had to ask them : 'Why are you so fearful? Have you no faith yet?'

We see how, even with the Apostles themselves, impressions follow one another ; transient, although vivid enough. The miracles moved and astonished them, but without revealing Christ to their souls ; without awakening in them that strong and luminous faith by which they would be enlightened later, and by which they themselves would illumine the whole Church. More than once this blindness is a painful surprise to our Lord. Thus after the miracles of feeding the multitudes in the wilderness, when our Lord had bidden them : 'beware of the leaven of the Pharisees,' they thought He was rebuking them for not having made due provision, and Christ sadly asks them :

'Why do you reason, because you have no bread?  
Do you not yet know nor understand? Have you still



your heart blinded? Having eyes, see you not? And having ears, hear you not? Neither do you remember? When I broke the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took you up? They say to Him: Twelve. When also the seven loaves among four thousand, how many baskets of fragments took you up? And they say to Him: Seven. And He said to them: How do you not yet understand?' (Mark viii, 17-21.)

A few days afterwards came the scene of Cæsarea Philippi, when their faith at last became definitely fixed: 'Thou art Christ, the Son of the Living God!' By that time Peter had certainly lived with Jesus for more than a year, listening to His instruction and witnessing His miracles; yet it was only then that for the first time he penetrated to the secret of His Person, and that not without a special revelation from Almighty God.

In the face of these undoubted facts, the same question presents itself once more: How is it that the crowds were so blind, and the Apostles themselves so slow to believe? And instinctively we are tempted to reply that it was because our Lord's own statements were not sufficiently explicit, or His miracles above question; and we readily echo the words of the Jews: 'How long dost Thou hold our souls in suspense? If Thou be the Christ, tell us plainly' (John x, 24); or those of His relations: 'If Thou do these things, manifest Thyself to the world' (John vii, 4). These are indeed the words of unbelievers, of men who had no idea of the true meaning of faith; they thought that a categorical statement backed by an unquestioned miracle would suffice. And Jesus Himself replied to them by the story of Dives and Lazarus: 'If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they believe if one rise from the dead' (Luke xvi, 31). Later on, it was His will that the raising of Lazarus should make this clearer still, confirming it by an experience of a decisive kind.

'Many therefore of the Jews, who were come to Mary and Martha and had seen the things that Jesus did, believed in Him. But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them the things that Jesus had done. The chief priests, therefore, and the Pharisees gathered a council

and said : What do we, for this Man doth many miracles ? If we let Him alone so, all will believe in Him ; and the Romans will come, and take away our place and nation.' (John xi, 45-48.)

In this case, where the facts were obvious to all, neither friends nor enemies dreamt of denying the miracle ; but the one party saw in it a reason for believing in Christ, and the other a motive for hounding Him to death. And these Pharisees were the same who, in Galilee, had harassed Him to give them a sign (Matt. xii, 38). S. Jerome in commenting on these demands writes with much truth : ' You who misrepresent what you see with your eyes, what you touch with your hand, that of which you receive the benefit, what would you say about a sign that came from heaven ? Most certainly you would say that, after all, the magicians of Egypt, too, wrought heavenly prodigies ' (*in Matt.*, xii, 38 ; P.L., XXVI, 82).

If anyone pressed these obstinate opponents of our Lord, and there was no other way by which they could elude the force of His words or works, they took refuge in ignorance. This was the line taken by the Pharisees, to whom the man born blind had related the evident miracle that Christ had worked for him : ' We know that God spoke to Moses : but as to this Man, we know not from whence He is ' (John ix, 29). It was the same when they were hard pressed by Jesus on the subject of S. John the Baptist : ' The baptism of John, was it from heaven or from men ? Answer Me.' ' We know not ' (Mark xi, 30, 33). These men preferred darkness to light and from the murky depths of their intellectual hiding-place no evidence could avail to drive them forth.

And if it be asked if we are to conclude from this that miracles have no evidential force, the answer is : Certainly not ; since those who witnessed them without yielding to their testimony are without excuse.

' If I had not done among them the works that no other man hath done, they would not have sin : but now they have both seen and hated both Me and My Father.' (John xv, 24.)

Christ's works were luminous in their appeal, and those who were not convinced by them were blind and wilfully

blind at that. 'If you were blind you should not have sin ; but now you say we see. Your sin remaineth' (ix, 41).

This teaching of our Lord helps us to understand the mystery, at first sight so puzzling, of a blindness thus obstinate in the face of evident facts. It shows us plainly that no miracles can be clear enough to force belief on one who does not wish to believe, loving darkness rather than light ; and yet they are clear enough in themselves, furnishing sufficiently certain proofs to put a responsibility upon those before whom they take place. And there are other incidents besides, that take us further in the direction of understanding the mystery with which we are here faced. When, at Capharnaum, the centurion besought Jesus to cure his son, Christ exclaimed sadly : 'Unless you see signs and wonders you believe not' (John iv, 48). And later, after the Resurrection, when Thomas had touched the scars of the risen Christ, with the cry : 'My Lord and my God,' Jesus answered : 'Because thou hast seen Me, Thomas, thou hast believed : blessed are they that have not seen and have believed' (xx, 29).

Must we conclude from these passages that these miracles are not precious graces, and that to witness them was not a very great blessing indeed ? Far from that being the case, we may rightly apply to Christ's miraculous works what He said of His whole life here below :

'Blessed are the eyes that see the things which you see. For I say to you that many prophets and kings have desired to see the things that you see, and have not seen them : and to hear the things that you hear, and have not heard them.' (Luke x, 23, 24.)

But this is only a blessing and a grace for those of docile heart, and they are happy indeed among all others who recognize the Saviour through one word falling from His lips, or a glimpse of Him as He passes by. It was thus that John the Baptist knew Him on His return from Jordan, as he saw Him pass : 'Behold the Lamb of God.' It was thus that after the Resurrection Mary knew Him, from the one word, 'Maria !' Christ's sheep, they knew the Good Shepherd's voice (John x, 4). And this precious privilege of faith, which at the least sign makes a man know his God and follow Him, appears on the Gospel's earliest page. Both

Zacharias and the Blessed Virgin received messages from the angel Gabriel ; but Zacharias' thoughts turned to his age, and the long barrenness of his wife ; so he asked for a sign, and was punished by the angel for his unbelief. But our Lady knew no such doubts ; she wished to be enlightened as to her virginity, in its relation to the angel's words, but she believed, and Zacharias' wife can say to her : ' Blessed art thou that hast believed.'

It is easy to see how mistaken are those who think that we see in a miracle such a manifestation of power as compels belief. Thus A. Reville has written : ' If the common opinion is well-founded, a miracle imposes faith from without, compelling assent, violating conviction and changing nothing of the real disposition of the witness.'<sup>1</sup> I know not if anyone has ever held so gross a view, but at any rate it is neither suggested in the Gospels nor taught by the Church. Further back, we recalled one of those passages in which the apologetic value of a miracle is made to appear in the strongest light. When, at Capharnaum, Christ saw the paralytic before Him, and noticed the tacit opposition of the Pharisees, He told them : ' that you may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins (then said He to the sick of the palsy) : Arise, take up thy bed, and go into thy house.' Whereupon ' the multitude . . . glorified God that gave such power to men.'

Upon this exclamation of these Jewish witnesses S. John Chrysostom comments thus : ' These poor people are still creeping upon the earth : they are hampered by the flesh. And Jesus did not reproach them, but by His works He aroused them little by little and raised their minds to higher things. It was only a small step further to hold Him as greater than all men and as one sent from God. Still, if they had been well grounded in this belief, they would have advanced little by little towards recognizing Him as the Son of God. They did not know how to hold firmly this first belief, and therefore they could not go beyond it' (P.G., LVII, 361).

These words precisely express the method followed by our Blessed Lord. He used miracles in the first place to arouse, awaken and raise the soul ; surprise and admiration being the first steps in this path. Then, if the soul is faithful and attentive, little by little she will discern the presence

<sup>1</sup> *Jésus de Nazareth*, II, p. 75.

of a supernatural power, and then of a Man to whom she may and ought to engage her faith.

Here we may call attention to the words put into our Lord's mouth by Clement of Alexandria (*Strom.*, II, 9, 45) : 'The first word of philosophy is admiration, as Plato has said in the *Theætetus* and Matthias in his *Traditiones* . . . and it is written in the Gospel of the Hebrews : he who admires will reign and he who reigns will take his rest.' A similar saying of Christ's is recorded and commented on in the homilies attributed to S. Macarius (*Hom.* 12, 17 ; P.G., XXXIV, 568) :

'Before the tragedy of the Cross the Apostles themselves, who remained in the Lord's company, saw great miracles, such as the healing of lepers and the raising of the dead. But they understood not the action of the divine power in men's hearts, nor that they ought to be born again spiritually and unite themselves to the super-celestial soul and become a new creature ; but they loved the Lord because of the miracles they saw. And the Lord asked them : "Why do you wonder at the miracles ? I give you a great inheritance that the whole world does not possess." But they remained strangers to His sayings until He rose from the dead, and for our sakes raised His Body above the heavens : and then the Spirit, the Paraclete entered into them and mingled Himself with their souls.'<sup>1</sup>

In this passage we have an explanation of a fact that the whole Gospel impresses upon our minds ; namely, that our Lord's whole ministry until His death was merely a preparation for what was to come. His miracles were evident, His discourses luminous ; but the Apostles lived in this light without being completely penetrated by it ; for that,

<sup>1</sup> This passage is especially interesting for the sake of the *logion* it enshrines. The commentary is not by S. Macarius. Dom Villecourt considers it to be the work of a Messalian of the fourth century ; Fr. Stiglmayr thinks he recognizes in it a Byzantine composition. Cp. A. Puech, *Histoire de la littérature grecque Chrétienne*, III (Paris, 1930), p. 138. In the passage quoted by us, the 'intermixture' spoken of between the Spirit and Christian souls cannot but arouse some suspicion.

On the subject of the miracles, their true use and how easily they can be abused, S. John of the Cross is to be read with profit (*Mount Carmel*, Book III, c. 30, especially n. 6 and 7) : 'To make much of these miracles is to lose a great deal of the essential habit of faith, for that habit of faith is essentially obscure ; consequently, according as signs and sure evidence increase, so the merit of believing grows less. For this reason S. Gregory says that faith has no merit when the reason is confronted with a human and tangible experience.'

the Cross would be necessary, and the descent of the Holy Ghost. This providential ordering of events is manifest when we consider the marvellous works of Christ ; and it is no less apparent in His words.

Following S. Chrysostom, we have observed that the first end of Christ's miracles was to arouse souls and raise them to a higher spiritual plane ; and this progressive education is still more apparent in the discourses of our Blessed Lord. We will mention only certain features that marked the development of His teaching. At first this seemed largely an echo of John the Baptist's words : ' The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe the Gospel.' Then He pursued this work of conversion in His moral teaching, which appears in its most developed form in the Sermon on the Mount. Here He set before His hearers a new and a higher standard of perfection embodied in the Beatitudes, in which is contained the whole ideal of the Christian life—that is, the life with God, the Heavenly Father, carried on interiorly, in the secrecy of the heart. All these discourses were listened to with eager attention ; what, we may ask, was their result ? Just the same as our Lord had foretold ; in some cases, a house built on the sand which the first rains of the season would carry away ; in others, one founded on the rock, unshaken by storm and flood. And the difference lay in the practical fulfilment of this entire programme of life. Those who neglected it saw their whole edifice collapse, while those who courageously applied themselves to it raised the structure of their lives on the sole foundation given by God, on the corner stone, on Christ Himself.

It was by this generous fidelity in following the law of Christ that the Apostles made themselves capable of learning His secrets later on. After the moral teaching came the announcement of the kingdom of God ; and here we begin to distinguish the two classes of our Lord's hearers. There was the crowd, to whom the parables were spoken ; and the Apostles, to whom their interpretation was revealed. The first looked without seeing, and listened without understanding ; it was only the second group that became initiates in the mystery of the kingdom. In this disposition of Providence, the Jansenists would come to recognize the working of their pitiless law. Thus Pascal would write : ' We shall understand nothing of God's works, unless we take it for granted that He wished to avenge Himself on

some and bring others to the Light' (*Pensées*, 566) ; and again (578) : 'The teaching of the Gospel is clear enough to enlighten the elect, and obscure enough to humble them ; it is obscure enough to blind the reprobate, and clear enough to condemn them, and leave them without excuse.' Such an interpretation is rejected by our Faith. It is no part of our Heavenly Father's purpose to blind His children. It was not for this that He sent His Son into the world and gave Him up to death. As we know, this disposition of His that we can trace in connection with the parables is at one and the same time a punishment and an effort of God's mercy as well. By failing to profit by graces received hitherto, so as to put into practice the teachings of Christ, the Jews had made themselves incapable of understanding the more difficult, and in their case unexpected, teaching concerning the kingdom of heaven. This would only be set before them in parables, and this incomplete manifestation would be the chastisement they had drawn upon themselves ; but at the same time it would be a precaution of a providential and merciful kind. Their weak sight would not have been able to endure the light, which would have blinded them. So different were the messianic King and His kingdom from what the Jews had looked for, that if this had come clearly before their eyes they could not have supported this revelation, which would have been a cause of scandal to their souls. But the Apostles became the depositaries of these secrets. They learnt to recognize the kingdom in the humble seed, with scarcely perceptible growth, destined, however, one day, to cover the whole world. At the same time they learnt to see in the messianic King neither a conqueror nor one triumphant, but something infinitely greater—Master of the world, King of angels, universal Judge.

And this distinction then set up between the two classes of hearers was from that time forward to be accentuated as the Gospel story went on. The Apostles were to be initiated more and more into the mysteries of the kingdom, which the crowd could only perceive in parables from afar. Not that we mean to say that Christianity, like the Gnostic sects later on, should place in two distinct classes the spirituals who know God, and the psychics or hylists who are incapable of doing so. The distinction was merely academic, and essentially of a provisional kind. Nothing was said in the

ear that must not be repeated on the house-tops, nothing spoken in confidence in the darkness that must not be repeated in the light of day. But so long as the training of the Apostles lasted, that is, while Christ lived, this distinction between the Apostles and the crowds became more and more intensified as the days went by.

On the shores of the lake it appeared under the double form of our Lord's teaching ; but soon His departure elsewhere would make it deeper still. Driven from Galilee by the machinations of His foes, Jesus withdrew to the Phœnician coast, and then to the territories of Philip. The Galilean crowds did not follow Him there ; only the Apostles were with Him, and the time had come for higher revelations, which had thus been reserved for the little band of favoured souls. Nor was this yet enough. Even among the twelve there were three who would be recipients of more precious secrets, of our Lord's glory and later of His sufferings ; of His Transfiguration and His Agony in the Garden. The messianic faith of Cæsarea Philippi, revealed by the Father and confessed by S. Peter, was to remain the secret of the twelve : ' . . . He commanded His disciples that they should tell no man that He was Jesus the Christ.' Equally, the heavenly glory manifested on the mountain must remain the secret of the three until the Resurrection of the Lord : ' Tell the vision to no man till the Son of Man be risen from the dead.'

In this economy of the Christian revelation we have already recognized a disposition of Providence. It was thus that the Church was formed and prepared for its mission of teaching, and that there was confided to its leaders the revelation which it was to be theirs to guard and dispense. No doubt this was a great good, but it was a great good drawn from a great evil. If, during our Lord's life, the highest revelations were thus reserved to the little group of Apostles, it was because the Galilean crowds had made themselves incapable of understanding them.

For the rest, even among the Apostles themselves, we observe that lack of the teachable spirit which hindered them from understanding, even to the end of the Gospel days. At Cæsarea Philippi, Peter confessed Christ the Son of the Living God, and it was an exalted act of faith, blessed by our Lord Himself ; yet it was incomplete because it could not suffer the prospect of the Cross. It was then that



Christ began to foretell to His disciples the suffering and death that awaited Him, and Peter could not contain himself when faced with a prediction such as that. 'Lord be it far from Thee, this shall not be done unto Thee.' And Christ answered sternly : 'Get thee behind me, Satan : thou art a scandal unto Me, because thou savourest not the things that are of God, but the things that are of men.' This energetic reproof went home, and neither Peter nor the others dared raise any further opposition to their Master's predictions on this point ; but we feel that they could not accept them, all the same. A few days later the Transfiguration took place, and our Lord, seeing the faith of the three Apostles strengthened by this miracle, took advantage of the fact to forecast His Passion anew ; they kept silence this time, but without being able to resign themselves to the prospect at all. More than once in the following months Christ repeated that He would be delivered up, condemned, scourged and crucified. The Apostles were grieved, but at once turned their minds from these statements, which they could not bring themselves to believe. So, when the catastrophe came at last, it took them unawares and overwhelmed them at a blow.

This fear of the Cross and inability to accept it forms one of the most striking contrasts between our Lord's public ministry and His glorified life. From the first pages of the Acts, the Apostles' faith seems to us completely transformed. For them the Cross is no longer a scandal, but a light ; no longer a weight that crushes them, but a magnetic force, ever drawing them to higher things. In this mystery, more than in all others, we see that words are powerless to convince men, even if they are the words of the Son of God ; grace is the only effective thing.

Finally, there is a whole class of Christ's discourses, peculiarly revealing to us ; we mean those that seem at first to find docile and believing hearers, and yet end in their revolt. We find these chiefly in S. John ; and I will quote two particular examples here : the discourse on the Bread of Life at Capharnaum ; and that spoken in the Temple on the Feast of Tabernacles, on the Heavenly Father and the freedom that His children enjoy. We may remember that the first of these was pronounced after the first miraculous multiplication of loaves. The miracle had produced such great enthusiasm in the crowd that the people wanted

to seize our Lord and make Him a king. The second was preceded by other conversations which had led a number of Jews to believe, and it was to them, as John expressly tells us, that this new discourse was addressed. In both cases Jesus tried to lead His hearers further by revealing Himself to them in a fuller way, but this light only blinded them and drove them to revolt. In the first case the hearers exclaim : ' This saying is hard and who can hear it,' and follow our Lord no more ; on the second occasion they treat Him as though possessed of a devil, and try to stone Him at the end.

And it is the same with the preaching at Nazareth, recorded by S. Luke. At first His fellow-citizens admired the gracious words that flowed from His lips, and He was well spoken of by all. But when they heard that strangers were preferred to themselves, and not only the people of Capharnaum but the Gentiles too, they flew into a rage, dragged Jesus out of the synagogue and wanted to hurl Him down the mountain-side.

To-day, when we re-read these discourses of our Lord, we are confounded at the blindness of the Jews ; for what drives them to such bitter rebellion is none other than the highest graces of God :

' He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood, abideth in Me : and I in him. As the living Father hath sent Me and I live by the Father : so he that eateth Me, the same also shall live by Me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Not as your fathers did eat manna and are dead. He that eateth this bread shall live for ever. . . . If you continue in My word you shall be My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free. . . . Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. Now the servant abideth not in the house for ever : but the son abideth for ever. If therefore the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed.' (John vi, 57-59.)

These words, as we know by experience, are spirit and life ; and yet they are the very words that drove the Jews and even most of the disciples into revolt.

Again, in the discourse at Nazareth, it is only the prospect of the conversion of the Gentiles that is set before the Jews, and, after all, this was their own hope and pride. Thus had Isaias sung :

‘ Arise, be enlightened, O Jerusalem : for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, darkness shall cover the earth and a mist the people : but the Lord shall arise upon thee and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall walk in thy light, and kings in the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thy eyes round about and see : all these are gathered together, they are come to thee. Thy sons shall come from afar and thy daughters shall rise up at thy side. Then shalt thou see and abound, and thy heart shall wonder and be enlarged : when the multitude of the sea shall be converted to thee, the strength of the Gentiles shall come to thee.’ (Isa. lx, 1-5.)

It is true that this glorious future was to be realized in quite a different way from that which they had conceived. They had looked for the conquest of the world, and they felt their own ruin to be at hand. The propagation of the kingdom of God over the whole earth would not mean their own exaltation, but their fall ; and this reversal of parts, this expulsion of the sons of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to be replaced by strangers at the royal feast, was the one intolerable scandal for them. But this arrangement of divine Providence sprang from their own sins, and even then it was within their power to keep their religious treasures, their Messias, their Temple, their God : no one wished it more than Christ Himself :

‘ Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered together thy children, as the hen doth gather her chickens under her wings, and thou wouldest not ? Behold, your house shall be left to you, desolate.’ (Matt. xxiii, 37-38 ; Luke xiii, 34-35.)

The deepest reason for their fall was precisely this obstinate determination to monopolise that divine heritage that God wished to communicate to the whole world. They proclaimed themselves sons of Abraham, and forgot that God could raise up sons to the Patriarch from the very stones themselves. It was this particularism that broke out so violently among the Jews at Nazareth, and which blinded with pride the Jews at Jerusalem, as we read in the same passage of S. John to which we have just referred. When

Christ wished to make them children of God, and promised them freedom, they answered with jealous pride : ' We are the seed of Abraham : and we have never been slaves to any man ' (viii, 33). And it is the same pride that surged up at Capharnaum at the first words of the discourse on the Bread of Life : ' Our fathers did eat manna in the desert ' (vi, 31). It was an inspiring memory : Moses, the bread from heaven ; here were the glories of their race ! What mattered Jesus and the Bread of Life ?

It is impossible to read these parts of the Gospel story without recalling what S. Paul was to write with grief, later on :

' But their senses were made dull. For, until this present day, the selfsame veil, in the reading of the Old Testament, remaineth not taken away (because in Christ it is made void). But even until this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. But when they shall be converted to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away. Now the Lord is a Spirit. And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.' (2 Cor. iii, 14-17.)

It may be asked, then, what was needed to convert these stubborn hearts ? The answer is : Christ's death, and the grace of the Holy Ghost.

And surely we gain the same impression when we read the story of the rich young man. He came to Christ, frank and upright, and Jesus ' looking on him loved him and said to him : One thing is wanting unto thee : go, sell whatever thou hast and give to the poor : and thou shalt have treasure in heaven. And come, follow Me. Who being struck sad at that saying went away sorrowful : for he had great possessions ' (Mark x, 20-22). How many others, possessed of great riches, were cheerfully to make that sacrifice for the love of Christ !

In the heart of pagan society, in Rome itself, and even in the imperial family, from the first century of Christianity, we have illustrious examples of this. The magistrate who was prefect of Rome in A.D. 64 when the Neronian persecution broke out was the elder brother of the future emperor Vespasian ; he sacrificed his life for his faith. His son, Flavius Clemens, was put to death in his turn by his cousin Domitian, his wife Domitilla sharing his fate. No doubt these illustrious victims had even greater wealth than the

rich young man of the Gospel. But they would not have been prepared for the Redeemer's call by so pure a life, or by so exact an observance of the commandments of God, nor had they had the happiness of seeing Christ Himself, of hearing His voice, and coming under the influence of His personal charm. Yet, whole-heartedly, they gave Him all they had, both riches and life itself : a thing impossible certainly to man, but not to God and His grace. Of course we must not say that Almighty God had refused His grace to the young man of the Gospel ; He gave him enough strength to follow the call he had heard ; but He did not give him that irresistible attraction which would so soon be drawing souls to Christ.

‘ I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself ’ : there we have the key of the whole Gospel. It is not only that the glance of faith sees in the sacrifice of Calvary the source of every grace ; it is that the whole history of the Gospel shows us souls, hitherto blind, slothful, stubborn, which only the death of Christ could transform. Our Lord spared no pains to make this lesson as clear as it could be. He did works which none had ever done, He spoke as no one had ever spoken before, He exercised over men a personal influence which none would ever exercise again. He carried on His ministry with a patience and devotion, with a delicacy and zeal which would remain for all generations of Christians the model ideal of love ; and yet we may say that not one perfect conversion resulted from all this. The Apostles themselves were, so far, only half Christians ; as for the crowds, they were powerfully impressed, no doubt, and easily stirred to enthusiasm ; but, not understanding the Gospel, they remained blind, and when Christ wished to enlighten them more fully, He only succeeded in offending them, and stirring them to revolt.

Later, S. Paul would write to the Christians at Corinth :

‘ And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not in loftiness of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of Christ. For I judged not myself to know anything among you, but Jesus Christ : and Him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not in the persuasive words of human wisdom, but in showing of the Spirit and power. That your faith might not stand

on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God.' (1 Cor. ii, 1-5.)

Here we recognize the same providential plan. No doubt, in His lifetime, Jesus could have poured out His graces with such persuasive force that His hearers would have been entirely converted—but then this intimate, supernatural action of His grace would have eluded our grasp. We might have attributed these conversions to the power of His miracles, the eloquence of His speech, or the charm of His person. But henceforth, in this matter, no one can make a mistake. The teaching, so powerfully given by our Lord on the necessity of Divine revelation and the Divine attraction, would receive decisive confirmation from the lack of success in His ministry while on earth.

On the Day of Pentecost one hundred and twenty disciples formed the whole Church, which met in a large room. That very day, as a result of the first preaching of S. Peter, there were converted three thousand souls: a few days later, after further preaching on his part, there came in five thousand more (Acts iv, 4). Nor was it a question of half-conversion with these Christians, who immediately after their baptism sold all they had and placed it in the Apostles' hands. We are far indeed from the rich young man, going away sad and discouraged! Not less evident is the change in the Apostles themselves. Two months have not passed between the Passion and Pentecost, and these same men who denied their Master when alive, are defending Him when, to the world, He was dead. Haled before the Sanhedrin, condemned and scourged, they rejoiced in their sufferings for His sake.

This miracle is one of the most manifest in the whole history of the Church, and its evidential value has been justly appealed to many times. If we mention it here, it is not to demonstrate the Divine origin of our religion, but to put in a clearer light our Lord's words: 'I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men to Myself.' Calvary is the sole foundation of Christianity; and we find S. Paul discountenancing subtlety of language, so as not to make void the Cross of Christ (1 Cor. i, 17). To the same end Jesus Himself renounced the joys of numerous and permanent conversions, reserving them for the grace flowing from His death. Of course, His work during those three years was

far from useless. Jesus had sown, and under the influence of His grace, the seeds would bear fruit. He had put treasures of teaching and example deep down in the Apostles' hearts and, as He had promised, the Holy Ghost would bring all that to their minds. The fire of Pentecost, descending upon them, would of a sudden enkindle all these memories, amassed day by day in the course of those three years, and thence would burst forth a great flame, never to be extinguished, in the Church of God. It is a very probable conjecture that it was the same with the great majority of the first Christians. Among the thousands of converts won by S. Peter, there must have been many who had already been touched by the discourse and example of Christ. But that impression, until then sterile, was rendered fertile only by the blood of the Cross, and by that source of living water promised by Christ, and now poured out upon the earth.

## *II. The Revelation of the Son of God.*

And this truth, as we see it, had been already proclaimed by S. Ignatius of Antioch in his letter to the Romans (iii, 3) : ' Nothing,' he writes, ' that is seen is fair. Even Jesus Christ, our God, has been more clearly manifested since He returned to His Father's bosom.' Surely, too, it is what our Blessed Lord said on the very eve of His Passion : ' Amen, amen, I say to you, unless the grain of wheat falling into the ground die, itself remaineth alone. But if it die it bringeth forth much fruit ' (John xii, 24) ; and shortly after, at the Last Supper : ' It is expedient to you that I go ' (xvi, 7). And we find the same thought in the Apostles' words : ' Wherefore, henceforth, we know no man according to the flesh. And if we have known Christ according to the flesh : but now we know Him so no longer ' (2 Cor. v, 16).

If in this light we ponder the Gospel anew, we shall recognize that, even during the lifetime of Christ, the decisive element in the revelation of the Son of God was not the spoken word, but the Divine Voice that, making itself heard in the soul, penetrated and filled it with light. ' No man can come to Me, except the Father, who hath sent Me draw Him ' (John vi, 44). ' Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona : because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but My Father who is in heaven ' (Matt. xvi, 17).

For many months Peter had been following and hearing Jesus, and yet it was not to His discourses that the Lord attributed the decisive revelation, but to grace from the Father in heaven.

Certainly our Lord's words are 'spirit and life' (John vi, 64) ; but not for all. Among those who heard them were some who recognized in them the words of eternal life (vi, 68) and lived by them, but it is certain that they had no place (viii, 37) in those who remained and died in their sins. And it was the same with miracles : 'the works that I do in the name of My Father, they give testimony of Me. But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep. My sheep hear My voice' (x, 25-27).<sup>1</sup>

The effort made by a disciple of Christ must, therefore, be above all an effort of a religious and interior kind. 'If then the light that is in thee be darkness : the darkness itself, how great shall it be?' (Matt. vi, 23). But, in the contrary sense : 'If then thy whole body be lightsome, having no part of darkness : the whole body shall be lightsome and, as a bright lamp, shall enlighten thee' (Luke xi, 36). There would be those who 'do truth' and come to the light, that their works may be manifest because they are done in God (see John iii, 19-21). These are the true sons of light ; their words are penetrated by the spirit of Christ ; they glimpse those depths that the simple clearness of our Lord's words only serves to veil from the proud and haughty soul.

And it was to this end that our Lord's efforts were directed, too. He taught, certainly, but by stimulating the soul's zeal, and by opening before it those mysterious and infinite perspectives, to the attainment of which it must courageously press onward. And this at the very beginning of the Galilean ministry : there is One here, He says, greater than Jonas and Solomon, more heavenly than the Manna, holier than the Temple, more hallowed than the Sabbath. These were brief sayings, called for by the circumstances of the moment, yet going back to the sources of Jewish history and religion and surpassing them. The parables are at once in bolder outline but more veiled as to their meaning. In

<sup>1</sup> In the second century we shall find the martyr Apollonius telling the Proconsul Perennius : 'Our Lord's words, Perennius, are apprehended by hearts that see, just as light is perceived by eyes that see : there is no more use in talking to the senseless than in showing a light to the blind' (*Acta Apollonii*, 32).



them we see the Son of Man sending His angels at the end of time, judging the whole world and, above all, standing out as God's only Son ; the Heir of the Master of the Vineyard. But these sublime revelations were presented in symbolic form—doubtless transparent enough to those who contemplated them in the light of God, but impenetrable to those who viewed them from the darkness of the world.

When would the glory of God's Son appear unveiled ? The Apostles themselves awaited it with impatience, and yet it was to them that it was given ' to know the mystery of the kingdom of God ' (Mark iv, 11). After the Last Supper, when the Master's declarations had become more explicit, they exclaimed with joy : ' Behold, now Thou speakest plainly, and speakest no proverb ' (John xvi, 29). The wish underlying their words is excusable enough, but the joy was premature. Jesus had told them : ' The hour cometh when I will no more speak to you in proverbs ' (John xvi, 25). That hour was now at hand, but it had not yet come. For that there was needed the descent of the Holy Ghost, throwing clearer light on our Lord's words (John xiv, 26).

What is still more surprising, and at the same time helpful in enabling us to appreciate better the infinite depths of Christ, is the fact that His words were mysterious to His Holy Mother herself. So much is clear from S. Luke, so full of memories of Mary, first in the incident of the finding of the child Jesus in the Temple. ' And they understood not the word that He spoke unto them ' (Luke ii, 50) ; while on two occasions (ii, 19, 51), the same evangelist shows us our Lady ' keeping all our Lord's words,' and pondering them in her heart. It was during these meditations that the Holy Ghost gave her new light as to the meaning of our Lord's words, and the insight thus communicated was of an incomparably deeper kind than that which would be granted to the Apostles ; but it had the same supernatural source—faith—and the same eternal vision was its goal.

One of the Fathers who has penetrated most deeply to the spirit of the Gospel—S. Irenæus—has written :<sup>1</sup> ' If even in this created world there are some things that God veils from us, and others that He places in reach of our knowledge, so in scriptural questions, since the whole of scripture is on the spiritual plane, there are some that we

<sup>1</sup> *Haer.*, II, 28, 2-3. Cp. *Histoire du Dogme de la Trinité*, II, 538.

can solve by God's grace, and others that God reserves to Himself, not only in this world but even in the world to come, so that God has always to teach, and men have always to learn about God.'

God is the Master ; man the disciple ; an essential relation that nothing can destroy, even the life of heaven itself. While proud souls would gladly end their tutelage, God's children rejoice in it, loving it as expressing that dependence upon their heavenly Father that unites them to Him, keeping them humbly linked with His own life. They are in no way ambitious to sound the depths of the mystery of Christ, but only more and more to realize that He is unsearchable, and, with the Apostle, to comprehend with the Saints what is His 'length and breadth and height and depth' (Eph. iii, 18) ; to recognize that it is indeed boundless and incommensurable with any greatness here below.

As we near the end of this book, let us try once more to contemplate this mystery of the Son of God. That is the whole burden of the Gospel ; and all the Christian's life. 'He that seeth Me, seeth the Father also.' These words, spoken by Jesus to His Apostles on the last day, call us to the path we have to tread. The union of the Son of God with His Father—that is the mystery of Christ. All our Lord's life was directed towards His Father, and to Him He would lead us, too. The words 'Come to the Father,' were heard over and over again by S. Ignatius of Antioch, like a murmur of living water at his heart's depth : and on every page of the Gospel its echo will be found by the Christian soul.

In our Lord's very Childhood this mystery made itself felt ; and, first, to Mary and Joseph themselves.

'Son, why hast Thou done so to us ? Behold, Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing. And He said to them : How is it that you sought Me ? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business ? And they understood not the word that He spoke unto them.' (Luke ii, 48-50.)

Certainly Mary and Joseph knew that Jesus had only one Father, but they did not yet realize how completely His human nature belonged to that Father, and how entirely it was not only consecrated to His service but, in every

sense, in His power. In the obscurity of those first years the Divine plan was veiled, but little by little it became more clear. No human life was ever like that, in its entire dependence on the Divine will ; always directed to the end assigned to it by the Father—the Cross. Christ knew the hour, which He would neither advance nor retard,<sup>1</sup> and the whole length of the way He was guided by one law alone : ‘ I do always the things that please Him ’ (John viii, 29). ‘ My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me ’ (John iv, 34). Nor was it a question only of obedience and docility, but of community of life. Nothing belongs to a man more than the works he performs and the doctrine he teaches ; now the works of Jesus were those of His heavenly Father<sup>2</sup> and His doctrine, too. ‘ My doctrine is not Mine, but His that sent Me ’ (John vii, 16, 17). Nor must this be interpreted, as in the case of the prophets, of a revelation communicated by God and received by man, but of a knowledge eternal and Divine, which the Son of God enjoyed before His Incarnation took place : ‘ I speak that which I have seen with My Father ’ (viii, 38 ; cp. xv, 15).

These theological principles, revealed to us chiefly in the discourses recorded by S. John, help us to understand from what source the unique tone of Christ’s teaching is derived : ‘ Never did man speak like this Man ’ (John vii, 46). Those among the prophets and Apostles who approached most nearly to the Divine mysteries were overwhelmed by them, nor could they speak of them except with trembling lips. So Isaias : ‘ Woe is me . . . because I am a man of unclean lips ! . . . and I have seen with my eyes the King, the Lord of Hosts ’ (Isa. vi, 5). And Jeremias : ‘ Thou hast deceived me, O Lord, and I am deceived : Thou hast been stronger than I, and Thou hast prevailed. . . . Then I said : I will not make mention of Him nor speak any more in His name. And there came in my heart as a burning fire, shut up in my bones : and I was wearied, not being able to bear it ’ (Jer. xx, 7 ff.). Again, S. Paul :

‘ I know a man in Christ : above fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I know not, or out of the body, I know not : God knoweth), such a one caught up to the

<sup>1</sup> John vii, 30 ; viii, 20 ; xii, 23–7 ; xiii, 1 ; xvii, 1. Cp. ii, 4 ; v, 25–8 ; Mark xiv, 41.

<sup>2</sup> John v, 36 ; x, 32, 37.

third heaven. And I know such a man (whether in the body, or out of the body, I know not : God knoweth) : that he was caught up into paradise and heard secret words which it is not granted to man to utter.' (2 Cor. xii, 2-4.)

These stammering words of men seized by emotion, pay indeed a homage to the heavenly mystery that blinds them by its light. But with Jesus there was nothing of the kind. The great truths, no matter how sublime, did not flow into His soul like the mountain torrent into the valley ; rather they filled it as a spring does a lake, without even a ripple to obscure the transparency of its depths. 'No one knoweth the Son but the Father : neither doth anyone know the Father but the Son and he to whom it shall please the Son to reveal Him' (Matt. xi, 27). 'No man hath seen God at any time : the only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father He hath declared Him' (John i, 18). 'Not that any man hath seen the Father : but he who is of God, hath seen the Father' (John vi, 46).

This Divine perspicuity is natural to the Son of God, and lights up His whole life ; thence came to His teaching that heavenly radiance that no merely human words have ever had.

Once more in the teaching of Jesus, the Divine realities of the supernatural world stand out as no mere man could ever make them do. 'None is good but one, that is God' (Mark x, 18). 'Call none your father upon earth, for one is your Father, who is in heaven, neither be ye called masters : for one is your Master, Christ' (Matt. xxiii, 9). 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His justice : and all these things shall be added unto you' (Matt. vi, 33). All this was said, not on the impulse of a sudden wave of enthusiasm, but in that atmosphere of unfailing serenity in which Christ always lived. He was in no way blind to the things of this earth ; He saw them and loved them well ; pure souls and converted sinners ; the poor who suffer persecution, and the shepherdless sheep, and the children ; even the lilies of the field. But He saw all that in a supernatural light, and He loved it in God. He was under no illusions ; 'He knew what was in man' ; but He recognized in them that Divine reflection wherein lies their true nobility, and He loved it in that.

And what hurt Him most among all the misery and defilement with which He was surrounded was the blindness of men. 'O unbelieving and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, how long shall I suffer you?' (Matt. xvii, 16). He who lived in the light, or rather, He who was the Light, could not understand this folly of sinners who 'loved darkness rather than the light, for their works were evil.'

This Divine glory, that shone through all Christ's teaching, appeared especially in certain characteristics in which was revealed most clearly the world in which He lived. Moral and religious controversies were settled by Him, not by being kept on the level of human discussion, but by being at once brought into direct relation with Almighty God.

To the empty quibbles of the Sadducees about the Resurrection, He replied: '(God) is not the God of the dead, but of the living' (Matt. xxii, 32). To the sophistries of the Pharisees about divorce: 'What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder' (Matt. xix, 6). When He wished to inculcate respect for little children's souls: 'I say to you that their angels in heaven always see the face of My Father that is in heaven' (Matt. xviii, 10). If He wished to imbue the sinner with hope of pardon, He showed how his conversion was the subject of rejoicing to the whole court of heaven (Luke xv, 7, 10).

To give confidence to those who prayed, He told them: 'I say not to you that I will ask the Father for you. For the Father Himself loveth you' (John xvi, 26). No words could be simpler than these. Yet none could penetrate deeper into our souls. It is the Son telling the secret of His Father.

If we try to bring to a focus these scattered rays in Christ's teaching, we are conscious of the immense distance between this unparalleled Master and all the teachers of this world—the distance between heaven and earth. 'You are from beneath: I am from above. You are of this world: I am not of this world' (John viii, 23). 'He that is of the earth . . . of the earth speaketh. He that cometh from above is above all. And what He hath seen and heard, that he testifieth' (John iii, 31-32). And if we fix our glance on this Son of God, we shall see that His whole life is in the Father. It comes entirely from Him, and entirely is it directed towards Him. This mysterious union, infinitely

surpassing all earthly relationships, has been made known to us by our Lord Himself when He said : ' I and the Father are one ' (John x, 30). It is impossible to know the Son without, at the same time, reaching a knowledge of the Father ; this was the sense of our Lord's words to Philip on the last day of His life : ' Have I been so long a time with you and have you not known Me ? Philip, he that seeth Me seeth the Father also ' (John xiv, 9). And before that He had told the Jews : ' Neither Me do you know, nor My Father. If you did know Me, perhaps you would know My Father also ' (John viii, 19).

It follows that only the Son can reveal the Father (Matt. xi, 27 ; John i, 18) ; and only the Father can draw men to the Son (John vi, 44). Father and Son are bound to each other by a perfect mutual knowledge, natural to Them, which They share with whom They will, and in what measure They will. And this doctrine is completed in the discourse after the Last Supper by the association, with the Father and the Son, of the Holy Spirit, Himself witness of the heavenly mystery, and the illuminator of souls.

And in this ineffable union of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost all Christians may share as invited guests, a gratuitous favour that enables them, as children of God, to apply to their own case what the Son said of Himself. They are no more from below, but from above ; not of this world, but of God (1 John iv, 5) ; they also live and, therefore, see. ' . . . the world seeth Me no more ; but you see Me : because I live, and you shall live ' (John xiv, 19).

### III. *Jesus Christ—our Life.*

We must live of God, if we are to see Him : but it is true also that we cannot live without seeing Him : ' We possess life only in so far as we are partakers of God ; and to partake of God is to know Him. . . . Man's life is the vision of God ' (*Vita hominis visio Dei*).<sup>1</sup> Jesus is the truth, and the life.

The whole human race lives by Him. In the past all prophecies, all revelations, all the desires of man had Him as their final goal. ' Many prophets and just men have desired to see the things that you see and have not seen them.' And now the disciples behold Him ; blessed are

<sup>1</sup> Irenæus, *Haer.*, IV, 20, 5-7.

they ! All down the centuries men have repeated the psalmist's prayer : ' Say to my soul : I am thy salvation.' And now, at last, they hear the response, so full of goodness, so human and, at the same time, so Divine : ' Come to Me, all you that labour and are burdened : and I will refresh you.'

Just as a sick man in a night of fever can with difficulty distinguish his father's features, and hears, but does not recognize, his voice, so the Jewish people had often felt Almighty God close to them and, as He spoke, their souls were stirred and moved. Now they behold Him, and in that Divine pity and love of men, now unveiled before their eyes, they recognize features half hidden from them before. He was the God of the burning bush, and of the cloud. It was He whom Abraham contemplated trembling with joy ; He whom Isaias saw in the Temple ; He who under so many symbols—Rock and Manna, Brazen Serpent and Shepherd—was foreshadowed to the sons of men.

And to His hearers, too often heedless of His words, Jesus recalls these symbols and apparitions, although with due reserve. And the Father reveals Him, too. He whom He sends to His people after a long line of prophets, rejected or put to death, is the supreme object of His love ; He is His only Son : ' Hear Him.' And He repeats the same words to every Christian : ' This is My beloved Son, all My wisdom, all My love. Hear Him.'

' I have told thee all things by My Word, who is My Son, and I have nothing more to reveal to thee or to tell thee ; fix thine eyes upon Him alone, for in Him I have given thee all things, spoken all things, revealed all things ; and thou wilt find in Him more than thou desirest or askest. For if thou desirest partial visions, revelations or words, fix thine eyes upon Him, and thou shalt find all. He is My whole voice and answer, My whole vision and revelation, which I spoke, answered, made and revealed, when I gave Him to be thy brother, master, companion, ransom and reward.'<sup>1</sup>

The Christian who has listened to this revelation of the Father can never dream of owning allegiance to any master but Christ. He who was to come is come, and we have not to look for another. If Jesus asks us in the day of trial : ' Will you also go away ? ' each Christian soul will answer

<sup>1</sup> S. John of the Cross, *Ascent of Mount Carmel*, II, 20, 4.

like Peter : ‘ . . . to whom shall we go ? Thou hast the words of eternal life.’

Our Lord’s demands may seem extreme to those who hear them for the first time. ‘ He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. . . .’ ‘ One is your Master, Christ.’ But they are the demands of the true Life, and those whom this Life has once seized in its grasp cannot even understand that such claims should be questioned, and that anything whatsoever should be preferred to the love of Christ.

Little by little, like leaven in the paste, this Life takes possession of the soul, which finds Almighty God nearer, and His claims more pressing every day. Contemplation becomes more fervent, love more glowing, until the soul is transformed and Christ, ‘ looking upon it, leaves upon it the impress of His own beauty,’ to use the words of S. John of the Cross ; and we can at last say with S. Paul : ‘ I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me.’

This is the end that we glimpse below, but only attain fully in heaven ; when we shall know Him as we are known, when we shall see Him as He is ; then shall we be fully transformed into Him, and that will be eternal life itself.

*Hæc est vita æterna : ut cognoscant te, solum verum Deum, et quem misisti, Iesum Christum.*



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## ABBREVIATIONS OF THE TITLES OF WORKS FREQUENTLY QUOTED

|          |                                                            |
|----------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| D.A.     | <i>Dictionnaire apologétique.</i>                          |
| D.B.     | <i>Dictionary of the Bible</i> (Hastings).                 |
| H.E.     | <i>Historia Ecclesiastica</i> (Eusebius).                  |
| J.T.S.   | <i>Journal of Theological Studies.</i>                     |
| R.B.     | <i>Revue biblique.</i>                                     |
| R.G.G.   | <i>Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart.</i>           |
| R.S.R.   | <i>Recherches de science religieuse.</i>                   |
| Z.K.T.   | <i>Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie.</i>              |
| Z.n.t.W. | <i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft.</i> |

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